

Iraq: Sanctions resulted in 7,000 deaths in October

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Almost 7,000 Iraqis, mostly children, died in October due to malnutrition and a lack of medicines caused by the U.N. economic sanctions, the health ministry said Sunday. Ministry figures quoted by the official news agency INA said "4,471 children under five died during October, compared with 272 children in the same period in 1989" before U.N. sanctions were imposed. The ministry said 1,765 children died from malnutrition, 1,432 children from acute diarrhoea and 1,247 from lung disease. In addition, 2,158 people aged more than 50 died in October, compared with 214 in the same period in 1989. Because of lack of medicine, some 550 died from high blood pressure, 275 from diabetes, and 1,333 from cancer, it said.

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13th Parliament to be inaugurated Saturday

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein will inaugurate the 13th Parliament on Saturday Nov. 29 with a Speech from the Throne addressed to a joint session of the Upper and Lower Houses, outlining the country's internal and external policies and the general programmes of the government. Following the King's address, the Lower House will hold a separate session presided over by the most senior member of the deputies to elect a speaker and the House's various committees. Both the Upper and Lower Houses will also elect committees to prepare their respective replies to the Speech from the Throne, to be delivered by the speakers of the two Houses at the Royal Court. A Royal Decree which was issued Sunday summoning Parliament to convene followed Saturday's announcement of the formation of the new Senate comprising 40 members.

U.S. demands access to Iraq's presidential palaces, says crisis 'not over by any means'

The U.S., which we know has been tempted to be hegemonistic in recent years, risked finding itself isolated — French PM

Combined agency dispatches

THE UNITED States demanded on Sunday unfettered access to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's palaces and other suspect sites for U.N. inspectors responsible for destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Arguing for keeping all U.N. sanctions in place in the meantime, Defence Secretary William Cohen accused Iraq of illegally blocking access to 63 sites, including the palaces, to stash possible biological and chemical weapons.

"Saddam Hussein has ruled 63 sites off-limits" to the U.N. Commission responsible for destroying any residual biological, chemical or nuclear weapons, Mr. Cohen said. "Those cannot be off-limits."

Mr. Cohen, on the NBC programme "Meet The Press," said that as soon as inspectors sought access to restricted sites, they were "either delayed or simply obstructed and refused. That cannot continue."

In a later appearance on the CNN programme "Late Edition," Mr. Cohen said the crisis with Iraq, which led to a huge U.S. military buildup in the region in the past three weeks, was "not over by any means."

"We'll know [it's over] when [Iraqi leader] Saddam Hussein agrees to allow the inspectors unfettered freedom to look at whatever sites they believe are suspect, where they might be carrying out illegal activities," Mr. Cohen said.

But Nizar Hamdoun, Iraq's representative at the United Nations, argued that Iraq should be allowed to restrict access to sites "directly related to the president" as a matter of sovereignty, national security and dignity.

"We think that those sites should not be visited," Mr. Hamdoun told "Meet The Press" on CNN, he added: "they have to respect the national security, sovereignty and dignity of Iraq."

Mr. Hussein reportedly possesses as many as 47 palaces. Iraqi officials have

said Rolf Ekeus, the previous executive director of the U.N. Commission disarming Iraq, had agreed to special treatment for the presidential compounds.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Washington would continue to oppose lifting U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq at the end of the 1991 Gulf war until President Hussein complied fully with all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

"What has to happen is Iraq has to get a clean bill of health on these weapons of mass destruction. UNSCOM are really the doctors here. And unless they can give a clean bill of health, then Saddam Hussein is not going to be able to get out of this sanctions regime," she said on the ABC programme "This Week."

U.N. arms experts on Sunday carried out a second day of inspections after Iraq scrapped its ban on Americans, as the United States rejected Russian calls to speed up moves to lift sanctions.

Iraq, meanwhile, condemned the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf and charged that Washington was looking for a new excuse to attack.

"I hope we can go on now with inspections as we have done in the past with no problems," said Nils Carlstrom, director of the U.N. arms monitoring centre in Baghdad. He said inspections on Saturday went "very well."

Mr. Carlstrom said a priority of the U.N. teams was to verify that dual-use equipment moved by the Iraqis during the three-week break in inspections had been returned.

The U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of disarming Iraq complained in early November that the potential military equipment had been moved and cameras tampered with in the absence of inspections.

Iraq's counterpart to UNSCOM said that "most of the material which had been moved from a certain number of sites in case of attack have been returned to



His Majesty King Hussein receives Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz at his residence, 'Bab Al Salam,' on Sunday (Photo by Youssef 'Allan')

Aziz voices Iraq's appreciation of Jordan's role in resolving crisis

100 Jordanians leave for Baghdad in show of support

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraqi deputy prime Minister Tareq Aziz described his meeting with His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday as highly productive and voiced appreciation for Jordan's mediating role with Western countries to help resolve the Iraqi issue.

Mr. Aziz, briefing Jordanian editors and columnists on the outcome of his country's standoff with the U.N., said he would convey the details of His Majesty's views to Iraqi president Saddam Hussein upon his return to Baghdad. He did not reveal further information about the meeting but said that talks with leaders and officials in Arab countries have been taking a new and positive turn recently.

The sites.

"The U.N. experts were able to verify [this] during their inspections on Saturday," it said, adding that the rest would also be put back under U.N. monitoring.

The latest inspections covered 10 sites and were carried out without incident, said Iraq's arms monitoring directorate.

General Hussam Mohammad Amin, head of the directorate, pledged that Iraq was "ready to co-operate fully with the Special Commission in order to help it complete its mission."

Meanwhile, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said on Sunday the combined efforts of other U.N. Security Council members had forced the United States to soften its stand on Iraq and avoid a possible conflict.

Mr. Jospin, addressing a congress of his Socialist Party, said France, Russia and Britain convinced the isolated Americans that the United Nations had to offer Baghdad some hope that trade sanctions against it would one day be lifted.

Now that the Iraq crisis has eased following Baghdad's decision to re-admit American arms experts in U.N. disarmament teams, Mr. Jospin said he hoped a solution to the problem could be found.

The prime minister told his fellow socialists the Iraq crisis had showed how European countries acting together could play an important role in international affairs.

"The United States, which we know has been tempted to be hegemonistic in recent years, risked finding itself isolated and — because of the direct and

(Continued on page 7)

9 Lebanese killed

Government, Amal accuse Israel of attack on civilians

TYRE (AFP) — The Lebanese government and the Shiite Amal movement both accused Israel of carrying out Sunday's mortar attack on the southern Lebanon village of Beit Lifa, which killed nine civilians.

But independent observers in the Israeli-occupied zone, where the village is situated, told AFP the shelling came from Lebanese territory to the north of the zone — pointing the blame away from the Jewish state.

Lebanese Social Affairs Minister Ayub Hmayed told the official ANI news agency that "it was the Israelis who bombed Beit Lifa."

The accusation was

repeated by Amal, who have been charged with responsibility for the shelling by the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

"What happened at Beit Lifa has all the hallmarks of an Israeli policy that tries to wreak terror in the villages of the zone in order to discredit the resistance," said an Amal MP, Ali Khreiss.

The independent sources said a total of 11 mortar rounds slammed into Beit Lifa, which is situated in the western sector of the zone occupied by Israel since 1985 as a buffer against guerrilla attacks on its northern border.

The shelling followed a two-hour skirmish Saturday

night between an Israeli patrol and a squad from Amal in which four of the Lebanese fighters were killed, according to Lebanese security sources.

Israel has blamed anti-Israeli fighters for the Beit Lifa massacre, but has not pointed the finger of blame at any group.

SLA commander Antoine Lahad has accused Amal, the Shiite Hizbollah movement, and the Lebanese army of involvement in the attack.

Hizbollah, which carries out the vast majority of anti-Israeli attacks in the occupied zone, has made no comment on the shelling.

Kingdom, EU to sign association agreement today; Crown Prince to meet Belgian king, NATO chief

From Ghaila Alul in Brussels

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan arrived in Brussels on Sunday to attend today's signing ceremony of the European Union (EU)-Jordan association agreement which will expand the scope of cooperation between countries of the EU and the Kingdom in political, security, economic and cultural fields.

During his two-day visit in Brussels, Prince Hassan will meet with the king of Belgium, Albert II, as well as with the secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), Javier Solana.

The Crown Prince will also hold talks with Arab and Muslim ambassadors in Brussels, the 15 European foreign ministers as well as with president of the Council of the EU, Jacques Poos, and President of the European Commission Jacques Santer.

Speaking to reporters ahead of the eve of the signing, Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf said the agreement is not only targeted towards enhancing economic relations with countries of the EU, but also developing political and security ties.

"The accord will pave the way for the establishment of a political dialogue which will address interna-

tional issues and create a mutual stand on these issues," said Dr. Khalaf.

With reference to the economic benefits, Dr. Khalaf said the accord will provide free access to EU markets for Jordan's industrial and agricultural products, encourage more direct foreign investments into Jordan and create job opportunities.

European products will be exempt from customs duties within a transitional period of 12 years.

The gradual elimination of customs duties on European products will help Jordanian industries adapt with the change in order to

(Continued on page 7)

CSS study reports unemployed at nearly double official figures

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) at the University of Jordan yesterday published its long-awaited employment study putting the percentage of jobless Jordanians at almost double the official estimates.

According to the study, conducted last December, unemployment ranged between 22 and 27.5 per cent (depending on what definition is used to determine who is unemployed) compared with a Department of Statistics figure of around 15 per cent.

The 27.5 per cent figure published by the CSS study drops to 22 per cent if one excludes from the unemployed pool those who have been unsuccessfully searching for a job for over 10 years, those who are looking for a job but will not accept the job on the day of the interview and those who, during their search, have refused one or more job

offers. CSS Director Mustafa Hamarneh stressed that the study was not only restricted to finding the national figure of unemployment. It rather explored work ethics and the so-called "culture of shame" which examines the cultural and social influences that determine people's behaviour towards employment.

The study also examined characteristics of the unemployed, their behaviour in searching for a job, their desire to improve their personal skills in order to increase their chances of obtaining a better job and the nature of existing recruiting and training facilities.

The study defines the unemployed as a "person who is 15-64 years-old, able to work, does not occupy any job, is looking for one and is willing to accept a job during the reference period (which in this case was one day)."

Analysts say that having two different figures for the unemployed should not be a cause for dispute. Important

factors, such as the definition of the unemployed and the reference period, can lead to different results that do not make one more accurate than the other.

The study found that the highest rates of unemployment are among those who are between the ages of 24 and 35, and those who have a diploma or any academic qualification less than that. Those who are 45-49 years-old have the lowest rates of unemployment (14.96 per cent). People with postgraduate degrees have the highest rate of employment (91.82 per cent).

Also the study found that the unemployment figure in Ma'an was the lowest (20.22 per cent) followed by Aqaba (23.03 per cent) followed by Amman (25.06 per cent). Madaba had the highest percentage of joblessness (36.36).

One of the important areas in the study questions the effectiveness of national service in the army. The study states that of the 66 per cent

of men who served in the army and are employed, 18.6 per cent acquired personal skills in the national service that helped them land a job. Occupational preference was another area examined in the study. The study stated that the most favoured jobs by women included teaching, administrative governmental professions, sewing and secretarial jobs. As for men, their preferences included driving cars, administrative governmental professions and guarding responsibilities.

Two of the jobs that none of those interviewed said they would take were street cleaning and domestic help.

Results showed that occupational preferences by unemployed men and women were limited to 281 professions. In developed countries, however, the number of professions reach 40,000 professions, as stated in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) listing of jobs.

The resemblance in the

qualifications and preferences of job-seekers creates high competition among them, the study's findings stated. This in turn decreases their chances of getting a job and decreases their ability in negotiating with employers who have the freedom of to be selective.

The study concludes that the responsibility of broadening the occupational boundaries of the unemployed falls on the educational, training, occupational and media institutions. These institutions need to study the nature of the future developing economy and strive to meet its needs.

"It is illogical that occupational preference for such a big sample is limited to a modest number of similar professions," the study stated.

The study completed in 24 days, used a sample of 6,000 families. It was approved by the government of former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, which allocated JD 43,550 to finance it.

(Continued on page 7)

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The apparent crisis within the Muslim Brotherhood deepened after its decision to boycott this month's parliamentary elections and could lead to the formation of a second Islamic party, some moderate leaders recently expelled from the movement have said.

"Nothing prevents the formation of a new party," said former Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Basam Emoush, who was expelled from the Muslim Brotherhood on Friday following the publication of a series of columns in the local papers highly critical of the movement's July boycott decision.

In a telephone interview with the Jordan Times yesterday, he implicitly accused the party's leadership of trying to destroy Jordan's oldest political movement through internal feuds.

Those who failed to be nominated to run in the elections took the boycott decision, and imposed it on the base for purely personal reasons, Dr. Emoush and other "doves" have charged. The Muslim Brotherhood, followed by its politi-

cal arm, the IAF, boycotted the elections in protest at what it said was the steady erosion of parliamentary authority under successive governments since His Majesty King Hussein launched democratic moves in 1989.

The Brotherhood expelled Abdullah Akaileh and Mohammad Azaydeh, two prominent moderate leaders, for defying the boycott decision. Both won in the Nov. 4 elections.

Dr. Emoush described the recent wave of expulsions as "arbitrary and illegal."

"Until now, the Brotherhood has never expelled anybody unless on moral grounds or for membership in anti-Islamic or suspected organisations," he said.

Dr. Emoush's expulsion came "in the track of destroying the movement and for merely personal reasons" Dr. Akaileh told the Jordan Times.

"There is a struggle for power [in the Brotherhood]," Dr. Akaileh stated, "and, in the final stage, all moderates will come together in a new party."

"The present party has no future, and there is a basic need for a new party. We are seriously thinking of it," he added.

However, the Muslim Brotherhood spokesman, Jamil Abu Bakr, doubted a second Islamic party will ever see the light.

"I do not believe such a party will ever be formed and if it does, it will not last long," he said.

Playing down differences, Mr. Abu Bakr maintained that "there are no divisions, but only different opinions concerning certain issues, which is natural."

The Brotherhood leadership issued conflicting statements during the past few weeks regarding its inclusion in the Upper House.

In earlier statements, the Brotherhood overall leader, Abdul Majeed Thneibat, said the movement did not object to the appointment of its members as senators. Later on, however, Mr. Thneibat retracted such statements and said the boycott of the Lower House elections also applied to the Upper House. As a result, no Islamists were included in the 13th Parliament's Upper House, appointed by Royal Decree on Saturday.

Differences within the

(Continued on page 7)

London rejects Mubarak charges of harbouring 'terrorist groups'

New security plan to be implemented in tourist areas

Combined agency dispatches

BRITISH OFFICIALS on Sunday vehemently rejected accusations by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that Britain was harbouring Islamist "terrorists" responsible for a bloody attack on tourists last week.

"We're not protecting terrorists. We unreservedly condemn all forms of terrorism. We are committed to taking action against anyone who uses the United Kingdom as a base for terrorist activity elsewhere," a Home Office spokesman said.

Mr. Mubarak accused London of allowing Islamist groups who backed and supported the massacre of 58 tourists in Luxor to live in Britain where "they collect funds and [plan] attacks."

Six British nationals were

among those slaughtered last Monday when a group of Islamists attacked them as they visited an ancient temple in southern Egypt.

Gamaa Islamiyya, the principal armed Islamist group in Egypt, claimed responsibility for the attack.

President Mubarak, speaking at the opening of an antiquities museum at Aswan, said if the world cooperated against Islamists, the Luxor massacre would not have taken place, "but the terrorists are protected by a country like England."

According to the Egyptian press, several leaders of the Islamist groups, such as Jihad and Tala'eh Al Fatah benefit from political asylum in Britain.

Cairo has sentenced some of them to death or prison sentences, or has issued arrest warrants against them, for

ordering or financing attacks in Egypt.

Responding to further criticism from the Egyptian leader that Britain's asylum laws were too weak, the Home Office official said: "Our legislation is already tough, one of the toughest in the world. We intend to strengthen it further."

Meanwhile, a newspaper reported the Egyptian government has launched a new security strategy for archaeological sites, following Monday's massacre.

The plan includes more financing for security, specialised anti-terrorist training for police, more sophisticated weaponry and increased civilian participation, according to the Arabic Al Akhbar Al Youm newspaper.

Monday's shooting attack was the deadliest in a five-

year Islamist campaign to oust the secular government of President Mubarak and install strict Islamist rule. The total death toll was 68, including four Egyptians — two of them policemen — and the six gunmen, killed during shoot-outs with police.

The attack threatens to devastate Egypt's \$3 billion tourism industry, the mainstay of its economy. Thousands of tourists worldwide have already cancelled trips to Egypt.

Mr. Mubarak on Tuesday visited the scene of the attack, at the Temple of Hatshepsut in the southern city of Luxor, and declared security there "a joke."

He immediately formed a special security committee, which recommended the strategy announced Saturday. He also revamped his security forces, firing Interior Minister

Hassan Alfi, who had supervised the nation's police.

His replacement, Habib Adli, has continued the shake-up, firing or demoting senior interior ministry officials hired by his predecessor and merging the police departments that cover tourism and antiquities.

The new security strategy, which Mr. Adli is to discuss with parliament Saturday, also includes cooperation with officials in southern Egyptian provinces — especially Assiut, the focal point of much of the Islamist activity, the newspaper said.

More than 1,150 people have been killed in the Islamist insurgency, most of them police and Islamists. Monday's attack signals that Islamists are once again targeting tourists, as they did earlier in their insurgency.



PALESTINIAN INDEPENDENCE: Palestinian youths burn a poster of Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu during a celebration for the anniversary of President Yasser Arafat's declaration of Palestinian independence Sunday. In the West Bank village of Dura Palestinians celebrated by hearing speeches and watching military exercises (Reuters photo)

Palestinian high court hears plea for release of Hamas activist

RAMALLAH (AP) — The Palestinian supreme court heard a petition Sunday for the release of a Hamas activist arrested following a suicide bombing attack in Jerusalem.

Mohammad Mosleh, a teacher, was detained Sept. 4, the same day that three suicide bombers blew themselves up in a crowded pedestrian mall in Jerusalem, killing five Israelis.

Mosleh is a member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), which claimed responsibility for the attack. He was arrested as the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) came under heavy pressure from Israel and the United States to crack down on Hamas.

Mosleh has never been charged, and no evidence has been presented against him.

said Khader Shikrat, director of the Palestinian Society for Human Rights. "The arrest of Mosleh was illegal," he told reporters. "President Arafat ordered the arrest without any justification."

Sunday's hearing was held behind closed doors. Palestinian officials had no immediate comment on their response to the petition, but Mr. Shikrat said the government argued that the high court had no jurisdiction in the case.

The court said it would rule on Nov. 30.

Seven months ago the court granted a petition for the release of five students at Bir Zeit University detained by the PNA as Hamas activists.

The court ordered Mr. Arafat to release them, but they were held for four more months.

Family of apparent bomb-builder disavows knowledge of radical ties

RAFAT (AP) — The family of a Palestinian man who apparently blew himself up trying to build a bomb said Saturday if he was involved with Islamists groups, they didn't know anything about it.

Badran Abdo, 23, a physics and chemistry teacher, was killed instantly in the explosion at his family home Friday evening.

An Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said troops found electrical cables, the chemical acetone and a device for measuring the flow of electricity, strongly suggesting Abdo was trying to make a bomb.

Rafat, about 30 kilometers southwest of the West Bank city of Nablus, was the home of Yehiyeh Ayyash, the chief bomb-maker for Hamas.

Ayyash, known as "the

engineer," was assassinated in January 1996 in an operation widely attributed to Israel. The killers used an explosives-rigged mobile phone.

Rafat is considered a Hamas stronghold, but Abdo's family said if he was involved with the group, they had no knowledge of it. They said he devoted most of his time to his studies.

Abdo's brother, Talal, said the explosion occurred at about 6 p.m. Friday as the family was watching television in another room. They rushed in and found his mangled body.

The family had just succeeded in putting out a fire set by the blast when Israeli soldiers arrived on the scene. The soldiers took the body and interrogated family members individually, they said.

One of Abdo's three brothers, Zaharan, is wanted by Israeli authorities, and his father Awad and another brother, Bilal, are in jail, villagers said.

They described Abdo as a respected teacher who was close to his pupils and was working on a master's degree in chemistry.

One Palestinian man was picked up for questioning after the explosion. Villagers said the detained man, Majid Ayyash, a member of the extended Ayyash family, had loaned his mobile telephone to Abdo shortly before the blast.

Like all other West Bank villages, Rafat is administered by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), but Israeli troops retain control over security.

Israeli army alarmed at rise in exemptions for religious Jews

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The government has rejected an urgent request from the Israeli army to stem a dramatic rise in the number of young men exempted from military service for religious reasons, the Haaretz newspaper reported Sunday.

The newspaper attributed the government's decision to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's dependence on the votes of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox religious parties which form part of his ruling coalition.

Under Israel's conscription rules, 18-year-olds can gain exemption from

mandatory military service if they are students in religious seminaries and declare that study of the Torah is "their way of life."

According to statistics released by the army, the number of men claiming religious exemptions rose from four per cent of all potential conscripts in 1994 to nearly eight per cent in 1997.

The figure is expected to reach 10 per cent by the year 2000, Haaretz said.

Alarmed that the flood of exemptions will constitute a serious manpower problem, the army asked the government to set a ceiling on the number of exemp-

tions allowed for religious reasons.

Haaretz linked the jump in youths seeking exemption from military service on religious grounds with the rise of religious parties which account for more than a third of Mr. Netanyahu's parliamentary majority.

Israeli men serve a mandatory three years in the army, plus annual reserve duty until the age of 49, while women serve 19 months.

The regular army currently has some 136,000 soldiers, according to the Tel Aviv University Centre for Strategic Studies.

Six corpses fished off Algiers coast — press

ALGIERS (AFP) — The bodies of six men, their throats cut, were fished out of the sea near Algiers Saturday, the Algerian press reported. The corpses of the six, all Asian in origin, were believed to have been dumped in sewers on the outskirts of Algiers, and washed out to sea by recent heavy rains, the newspapers Liberte and Al Khabar reported Sunday. They were found at Kaa-Essour, near the western Algiers suburb of Bab Al Oued, the papers said. There was no immediate official confirmation of the reports. Japanese, Chinese, South Korean and Vietnamese diplomats told AFP that none of their nationals had been reported missing in recent months, although the Chinese embassy said it had no news of two Chinese nationals missing since 1995.

ESCWA convenes energy meeting in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Beirut-based Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will convene the first session

of its energy committee in Amman, next week, to be preceded by an expert group meeting on prospects for regional and international electricity networks in the ESCWA region. ESCWA said in press release yesterday. The two consecutive meetings will take place at Amra Hotel between Nov. 25 and 27. The aim of the expert group meeting is to provide a forum for national experts and officials and representatives of international organizations involved in the electric power sector to exchange views and experiences on various electricity-related issues.

Six activists killed in Turkish shoot-out

ANKARA (AFP) — Six members of illegal extreme-left organisations were killed in a shootout with security forces near Tokat, Anatolia news agency reported Sunday. The shooting was sparked by the group's refusal to surrender to security forces, the

NEWS IN BRIEF

agency said, adding that two of the activists were women. The report did not say when the incident took place. Turkish authorities announced in September that the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) was trying to set up a base in the Black Sea region with the help of several underground far-left organisations.

Three Africans arrested for 'money cloning'

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Police in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have arrested three Africans for embezzling people by claiming to be able to multiply their money by magic. Al Bayan newspaper reported Sunday. The three were arrested in the northern port city of Ras Al Khaimah after receiving large sums from Emiratis who were promised that their dirhams, the UAE currency, would be magically converted into dollars at a very favourable exchange rate, the paper said. Around \$22,000 and 150,000

dirhams were seized with the three, whose identities were not disclosed.

Former rebel accepts governor's post in Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Former rebel leader Lam Akol announced Sunday he had accepted nomination to the office of governor of south Sudan's Upper Nile state. "This was not out of a personal desire but in response to a demand by the people of Upper Nile," Mr. Akol said. The president, General Omar Al Bashir, nominates three candidates to the governorship of each of the 10 south Sudanese states, and the legislative council of each state is to select from among the three. The governors will join a 24-member coordinating council which is to rule south Sudan under the chairmanship of Assistant President Riek Machar for a four-year transition period leading to a referendum on self-determination. Mr. Akol, head of a splinter faction from the mainstream Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), joined a number of other south Sudanese factions in alliance with the government about two months ago.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:10...A Show With the Mouse
14:30...The Cowboys of the Moomees
15:00...Gillette Sports Special
15:15...Riding High
15:30...Animal Show
16:00...Oliver Twist
16:30...Neighbours
17:00...French Programmes
19:00...News in French
19:15...French programme
19:30...News Headline
19:35...Comedy — Murphy Brown
20:00...The Health Show
20:30...Babylon 5
21:10...Highlander
22:00...News in English
22:30...Emergency Room
23:15...Cosmos

PRAYER TIMES

04:46...Fajr
06:07...Sunrise Duha
11:22...Dhuhr
14:13...Asr
16:37...Maghreb
17:58...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.
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Amman International Church
Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 688404
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Temperatures are expected to rise slightly, clouds appearing at different altitudes, and winds southeasterly moderate. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate

and seas calm.
Min/Max temp.
Amman...08/22
Agaba...15/27
Deserts...05/23
Jordan Valley...14/27

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 19, Agaba 25 Humidity
readings: Amman 44 per cent.
Agaba 42 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh...736011
Dr. Tawfiq Qub'ain...623029
Dr. Hisham Kan'an...790286
Dr. Awmi Al Hawamdeh 832350
Firas pharmacy...661912
Ferdows pharmacy...778336
Al Asema pharmacy...637055
Nairoukh pharmacy...623672
Al Salam pharmacy...636730
Yacoub pharmacy...644945
Shmeisani pharmacy...637660
Najib pharmacy...847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir...276852
Al Quds pharmacy...—

ZARQA:
Dr. Aloram Haddad...985550
Khalifeh pharmacy...985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre...637111
Civil Defence Department...661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue...630341
Civil Defence Emergency...199
Rescue Police...192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade...617101
Blood Bank...775121
Highway Police...843402
Traffic Police...896390
Public Security Dept...630321
Hotel Complaints...605800
Price Complaints...661176
Water & Sewage Complaints...897487
Amman Municipality Complaints...781111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)...121
Overseas Calls...010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs...623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs...661101
Jordan Television...773111
Radio Jordan...774117
Water Authority...680100
J. Electricity Authority...815615
Electric Power Co...636381
RJ Flight Information...08-53200
Queen Alla Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Luzaila...630195
Husseini Medical Centre...81381332
Khalidi Maternity...642816
Akileh Maternity...643441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity...642362
Malhas J. Amman...636140
Palestine, Shmeisani...607071
Stroussni Hospital...669131
University Hospital...845845
Al-Muasher Hospital...667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali...666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali...664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen...777101/3
Al-Bashir...775111/26
Army, Marka...891611/15
Queen Alla Hospital...602240/50
Amal Hospital...674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery...865199

AAQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital
(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15...Sanaa (RJ)
08:25...Damascus (RJ)
08:35...Jeddah (RJ)
09:30...New Delhi (RJ)
09:50...Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:05...Beirut (RJ)
16:20...Cairo (RJ)
16:25...London (RJ)
16:45...New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:05...Kuwait (RJ)
18:35...Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
19:00...Bangkok (RJ)
22:00...Kuala Lumpur, Abu

Dhabi (RJ)
23:15...Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
04:00...Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

04:15...London (BA)
09:15...Cairo (MS)
09:30...Al Arish (PF)
12:00...Khartoum (SD)
13:25...Bahrain (GF)
14:30...Doha (QR)
15:05...Vienna (OS)
16:00...Dubai (EK)
18:00...Islamabad (SD)
20:00...Tel Aviv (LY)
21:10...Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:30...Athens (OA)
01:25...Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20...Beirut (RJ)
06:30...Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:50...Tel Aviv (RW)
07:55...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
08:50...Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
10:20...Agaba (RW)
11:40...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
20:30...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
21:50...Agaba (RW)

10:10...Frankfurt, London (RJ)
11:00...Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:05...Kuwait (RJ)
12:30...Cairo (RJ)
19:00...Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
20:15...Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:40...Damascus (RJ)
20:45...Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:15...Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:45...Sanaa (RJ)
23:00...Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

06:00...Istanbul (TK)
08:00...Beirut (ME)
08:25...London (BA)
10:30...Al Arish (PF)
10:30...Cairo (MS)
13:20...Islamabad (SD)
14:15...Bahrain (GF)
15:50...Doha (QR)
15:50...Vienna (OS)
17:00...Damascus, Dubai (EK)
19:00...Khartoum (SD)
21:20...Tel Aviv (LY)
23:53...Damascus, Paris (AF)
02:25...Amsterdam (KL)
03:00...Athens (OA)

Seminar on small enterprise promotion for women in Arab regions opens next month

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor will on Dec. 2 attend a workshop entitled "Regional Seminar on Micro and Small Enterprise Promotion for Women in the Arab Region," which is organized by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) in association with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), according to a press release Sunday.

In addition to Jordan, ten Arab states are involved in the workshop, which is designed to increase local women's participation in economic activity and stimulate the involvement of

local official and Arab non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in developing small-size projects, the statement continued.

The three-day workshop will focus on the importance of involving Arab women in economic development through creating job opportunities to help them adjust to developments in the region, the announcement read.

The workshop also has the objective of helping the participants exchange expertise and pioneer experiences in implementing small-scale projects and building communication networks, as

well as creating a dialogue among the parties concerned with development of projects both at the private and public sector levels, the press release continued.

The workshop is expected to create a favourable climate to encourage Arab women to get involved and succeed in carrying out small-size projects, according to the statement.

Taking part in the workshop will be delegations representing NGOs and experts and representatives of the private sector, employers, and workers associations, the announcement read.

Discussion will revolve around such topics as the status of Arab working women involved in small-size projects experiments by NGOs in developing and supporting such projects, essential requirements and elements for their sustainability, and obstacles facing employed women, the press release said.

The participants will emphasise the importance of international and regional cooperation and the creation of communication networks in this field at the Arab level, the announcement concluded.

JD3.4 billion water investment programme to be presented Monday

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will unveil a multi-billion dollar water sector investment programme covering the years 1997-2011 at a donor conference set to open Monday at the southern city of Petra, officials said Sunday.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Hadadin will present the estimated JD3.4 billion programme to over 100 participants, including Arab and European ambassadors and other representatives of donor bodies, according to the officials.

The programme, key to resolving the Kingdom's worsening water shortage, includes ongoing water rehabilitation schemes, new dams, irrigation networks, and desalination projects.

The blue-print includes five water "peace projects," whose implementation was made possible after Jordan signed a 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

The Petra meeting comes close on the heels of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference in Dhahra, where a representative of Jordan

explained to investors and water experts that Jordanians pay over \$1 per cubic metre of water for domestic use and more than \$2 for industrial use.

Hazem Naser, a senior advisor at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, emphasised the need for investment in water infrastructure, noting that government investment in the water sector accounts for one-third of the total expenditure in Jordan's five-year development plan.

Jordan is witnessing an

over-utilisation of ground water and increasing water pollution, which will lead to major challenges and health hazards, he said.

Financing for water management could be secured through international donors and private sector concessions, Mr. Naser suggested.

Technological developments such as desalination and conservation are costly, according to Mr. Naser, but the population could be mobilised to ensure water conservation and water resource management.

Prince opens tourism seminar by stressing importance of training industry personnel

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Abdullah Sunday opened the 32nd meeting of the Jordanian chapter of the Golden Helm Society by emphasising Jordan's determination to invest more in training personnel for the tourism industry, which he said constitutes a prime element of the national economy.

Prince Abdullah said the world community in general and the tourism sector in particular have expressed their appreciation of Jordan's efforts to enhance peace and security in the Middle East, which abounds with tourist

and archaeological sites.

Since the conclusion of the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty, the Kingdom has been witnessing increasing numbers of tourists, he said.

For this reason, Jordan has been building more tourist facilities and major hotels in Amman and tourist areas, he added.

The Golden Helm Society, which was founded in Italy in 1974, is an organisation dedicated to promoting international tourism.

The two-day meeting is being attended by tourism experts and society members

who will discuss a range of topics related to encouraging and promoting tourism, international tourism relations, exchange of expertise, and tourism as an industry that bolsters economies, according to the organisers, the Golden Helm Society and Italian tour operators.

Meanwhile, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Biltaji Sunday met with a delegation from the European Union (EU) and discussed prospects for financing the development of the Umm Al Rasas archaeological site in the Madaba governorate.

The delegation members expressed interest in the project, which entails protecting the mosaics at the site.

They said the government should give this project priority among the various plans for which Jordan will request financing in its upcoming discussions with the EU.

According to Ministry of Tourism sources, the \$1.5 million project entails developing the archaeological site by building a visitors centre, a parking lot, and utilities for visitors, in addition to providing protection to the Byzantine church mosaics.

Fourth centrist parliamentary bloc announced

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A fourth centrist bloc in the newly-elected 13th Parliament was announced yesterday.

The ten-member "Parliamentary Alliance Bloc" includes former Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb and Lutfi Barghouti (Amman 3rd District), former ambassador Amjad Majali (Karak), Abdul Karim Dughmi (Mafraq), Hmoud Khalayleh (Zarqa), former minister Abdul Razzaq Ensour, former minister Samir Qu'war and Salameh Hayyari (Balqa), former minister Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat (Irbid), and

Yousef Shreideh (Koura and North Ghor).

Three other centrist blocs — the 20-member Al Wifaq (The Accord), under the leadership of National Constitutional Party (NCP) Secretary General Abdul Hadi Majali, the 11-member Democratic Solidarity, under the leadership of former Lower House Speaker Sa'ed Hayel Sour, and the 14-member National Bloc, under the leadership of Mohammad Abu Hdeib — have been formed in the past two weeks.

Though their platforms have not yet been announced, the four blocs, accounting for more than two-thirds of the 80-member Lower House, are not

expected to differ much from each other, thus undepicting little parliamentary debate over key issues, such as economic reforms and normalisation of ties with Israel, observers have said.

A fifth bloc, however, including Islamic and leftist opposition figures, could be finalised after Parliament convenes and the Lower House Speaker is elected Saturday, the projected bloc's architects have said.

This projected fifth bloc could include Khalil Haddadin, secretary general of the Jordanian Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, the only two former Muslim Brotherhood members who ran

in the Nov. 4 elections, Abdullah Akaleh (Tafilah) and Mohammad Azzaydeh (Madaba). Jordanian Unionist Democratic Party's Bassam Haddadin (Zarqa), Ba'athist Nashed Hamarneh, and leftist Mohammad Bataineh (Irbid), Mohammad Adhaleh (Karak), and Khalid Tarawneh (Karak), former senator and director of the Civil Defence Department.

In a recent interview with the Jordan Times, however, Mr. Haddadin said discussions among these deputies were still under way and no final decision was reached on the establishment of a bloc.

International competition seeks children's artwork

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government of India has announced the 49th annual Shankar International Children's Competition, a contest that encourages competitors from around the world to submit their own drawings, paintings, or written works.

The main objective of the competition, which is open to participants born on or after Jan. 1, 1982 from every country, is to promote understanding among the children of the world, according to the organisers.

Entries may cover any topic or theme in two main categories: paintings/drawings or written works.

Visual submissions can be to any medium and should be larger than 30 x 40 cm in size. Written submissions can take the form of poems, plays, short stories, essays, or descriptive writing and must be in English. Each competitor may submit up to six entries in each category.

The prizes for the winners include the President of India's Gold Medal for the best visual entry, the Shankar Award for the best written work, 24 Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Gold Medals, and other awards and medals.

The International Children's Competition was started in 1949 by K. Shankar Pillai, a political economist who became an author and illustrator of children's books.

For more information, please contact the Indian embassy in Amman.

Tourism ministry announces traditional market at Petra to open by year's end

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has finalised all the technical arrangements for the creation of the Petra traditional market, which is expected to be formally opened towards the end of this year, according to Ihab Ammarin, assistant director of the ministry's tourist projects department.

The project has the goal of protecting the archaeological sites of Petra and entails transferring local souvenir peddlers from the middle of the ancient site

to the visitors centre, which is known as the "tourist park," he said.

The project is expected to yield substantial economic benefits for the local merchants in souvenirs and traditional handicrafts since they will be gathered in a central location instead of dispersed over a wide area, according to Mr. Ammarin.

The project comprises a row of stores and workshops of traditional handicrafts adjoined by basic utilities and services, in addition to restaurants,

cafeterias, sanitary units, and other essential services, he explained.

According to Mr. Ammarin, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) has prepared the designs for the 1,300 square metre area of the project in association with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

The ministry has announced a tender inviting local firms to submit bids for the plan, which should be completed before the end of 1997, he said.

Jordan will take part in Tehran conference next month — Majali

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday said Jordan will attend the Islamic nations' summit due to be held in Tehran in the first half of next month.

During a visit to the Ministry of Information, where he chaired the ministry's weekly meeting, Dr. Majali said Jordan's participation in the summit reflects its principled stand of promoting the Kingdom's cooperation with Arab and Islamic countries in fields of common interest.

Referring to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic meeting, Dr. Majali said Jordan gained a great deal, especially in

economic fields.

On the Kingdom's 1998 fiscal budget, the prime minister said the Cabinet has conducted a preliminary reading of the draft budget, which he said will be finalised next week.

He stressed the need, however, for controlling public spending, since this policy, he said, is needed to reduce the margin of deficit in the annual budget, become self-reliant, and achieve the goal of covering expenses with revenues.

Dr. Majali expressed hope that 1998 will witness an increase in state treasury revenues. He added that the stable exchange rate of the dinar

reflects positively on the country's economic performance and encourages investment.

He underlined the importance of the media in reflecting Jordan's status among the countries of the world and urged the media to project Jordan's achievements to the outside world.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Sumir Murawi presented a general outline of the 1998 budget for the Ministry of Information and its affiliated departments, including radio, television, and the Jordan News Agency, as well as the Press and Publications Department.

Gulgee and son Amin display power of creation at first Jordanian exhibition

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The sense of the tremendous amount of energy released during moments of creativity is felt in the works of Gulgee, one of Pakistan's famous calligraphy artists, whose works are on display for the first time in Jordan at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.

The exhibition, which was opened by HRH Princess Rania, is a father and son event, displaying paintings by the father and sculptures by the son, both dominant artists of our time and strongly influenced by Islam.

"After achieving such works...such an outburst leaves me exhausted, thoroughly drained, but exhilarated," Gulgee said.

Gulgee's approach to creativity is more comparable to Japanese calligraphers than other contemporary Islamic artists, who find expression through carefully studied and executed calligraphy composition.

Gulgee, who is over seventy years of age, still paints elaborate arabesques and complicated calligraphic arrangements.

His ability to combine aesthetic power with mathematical precision finds an awe-inspiring expression in his work with semi-precious stones, especially lapis lazuli.

"My creations are spontaneous. You are relaying your part of a cosmic awareness, you are part of God, and you are part of the universe. That spirit flows through you into your work and you are just a channel through which that feeling flows. You get into a state of ecstasy when you work," he explained.

Gulgee, who is known as the "revered flower" said he creates his art under the influence of a mystical power, the instrument of a vital force that resounds in his being.

"It gives me the power to reach out to the very edges of space and time, to create from the primordial residue [and] to become one with an entire cosmic feeling," he explained.

He displays his pride of art and God, for which he said "I have no place for the practice of religion because it takes me away from God. I am the Sufi mystic who can communicate on a higher plane."

"For me, Allah is power and majesty and beauty on the ultimate scale," he stated.

On why he chose Islamic art and why he tries to express it in such perspectives, he replied "in today's world, the voice of the east has little chance to be heard in the west and thus misunderstandings occur, and the comprehension that all human beings are alike fades away."

"This is particularly true in the case of Islam, where an...incorrect image prevails in the Western world at large," he added.

"Contrary to the common perception that Islam is a religion of fanatics and shuns art and artists, what greater sign and encouragement does one need than to follow in the path and the shadow of the Creator Himself?"

Two different traditions are expressed in his paintings: Islamic calligraphy, in which writing carries a religious message, and the Western style of abstract expressionism, with the movement of brush strokes.

One of his greatest works is a portrait of the Aga Khan, done with over 6,000 pieces of lapis lazuli.

Born Mohammed Ismail, he began sending vibes of a future in art from the age of eight, when he applied for governmental scholarships.

There were none for art, so he studied engineering, graduating with a BSc. with honours from Aligarh Muslim University at the age of 20 and then moving on to Columbia and Harvard Universities in the U.S. for specialised graduate studies.

Gulgee has worked as an engineer and still respects the profession but his true love and "raison d'être" is his art.

His works include a variety of mediums: oil, brush and ink, stone, copper, bronze, onyx, and lapis lazuli.

Gulgee always encouraged his children to find their way in art and expressionism. Therefore, it came



Pakistani artist Gulgee, Pakistani Ambassador Syed Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Amin Gulgee, Meher Noqvi, and Mrs. Gulgee view one of Amin Gulgee's sculptures (Photo by Nadia Mukhlis)

as no surprise to him when his son, Amin Gulgee, became a sculptor.

Amin expresses his need to work to better understand himself through an intuitive process that makes him feel closer to God.

"Through the juxtaposition of antithetical and anachronistic elements, I hope to capture the elastic nature of time, in which future, past, and present exist together harmoniously. My work is a sonnet of my home, Pakistan, and a prayer to my God," the younger Gulgee explained.

He completed his early studies in Pakistan and then

graduated from Yale University, where he majored in economics.

Since his return to Karachi in 1989, he has immersed himself in his artistic compositions and felt that his expressive force is best accommodated through sculpture, especially with metal.

Along with metal, he frequently uses rock crystals, for two reasons: as a symbol of the forces of nature and as a historical affiliation with the "Early Fatimids," who patronised rock crystal carvings.

In his compositions with inscriptions, he tries to free

calligraphy from the act of writing, focusing instead on the aesthetic content.

Being a jewellery designer as well, he insists that people have to touch his works to feel their beauty.

Amin uses ancient motifs but appends them with modern abstraction. He combines old symbols with artefacts of the modern world, such as nuts and bolts, computer chips, and glass or metal tubing.

The exhibition is a tribute to Islam and expressionism and an example of the continuing dialogue between Eastern and Western artistic traditions.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- FILM**
- * "Police" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh at 8:30 p.m.
- FIFTH JORDANIAN THEATRE FESTIVAL**
- * "Play entitled "Love in Autumn" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- TWELFTH ITALIAN FILM WEEK**
- * Two films entitled "Lo specchio delle meraviglie" (Through the Wonder Glass) and "La hionda" (The Bloode) with subtitles in English, at Samir Al Rifa'i auditorium, University of Jordan at 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. respectively.
- LECTURES**
- * "Bird watching in Jordan" by Quasay Ahmad at the Friends of Archaeology Centre (Tel. 696682), at 6:00 p.m.
 - * "Jerusalem in Contemporary Arab History" by Dr. Hazem Nusseibah at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
- * Paintings by Saadi Al-
- Kaabi at Oriani Gallery (Tel. 681303/4), until Dec. 4.
- * Exhibitions of paintings by Algerian artist Rashid Koraishi and calligraphy by Iraqi artist Hassan Mas'oudi at Darat Al Funoo, Jabal Weibdeh until Dec. 31.
 - * Also displaying paintings by Jordanian artist Nasr Abdul Aziz and works by contemporary Arab artists.
 - * "Portrait '97" — works by over thirty Arab artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uttheina, until Nov. 30.
 - * Works by Khalid Khreis at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Dec. 10.
 - * Exhibition of wallhangings and weavings by Bashar Kathem and others at Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra Street (Tel. 699131/2) until Dec. 4.
 - * "Journey Within" by Pakistani artist Gulgee and his son, sculptor Amin Gulgee, at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts (Tel. 630128), until Dec. 15.
 - * Bani Hamida fall exhibition "Encounter" (displaying rugs designed by Japanese textile designer Tomoko Iyoda) at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 25 (Tel. 658696/7).

Bosnian Serbs vote for second day in key polls

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFP) — Polls opened for a second day Sunday to elect a parliament for the Serb-run half of Bosnia, in a vote international officials hope will resolve a crippling power struggle.

The last parliament was packed with ultranationalists loyal to wartime leader Radovan Karadzic, now a war crimes suspect barred from politics.

Since July the hardliners have been locked in a trial of strength with Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic, a former Karadzic ally, who won international backing by pledging to support the Dayton peace accords by attacking corruption.

Voting is for 83 seats in the parliament of the Bosnian Serb entity, the Republika Srpska, which covers 49 per cent of Bosnia.

After a disappointing turnout Saturday — put at around 30 per cent by Serb sources — the

Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is supervising the vote, urged voters to go to the polls Sunday.

The Bosnian Serb electoral commission also "issued an appeal to citizens to express their political will," the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA reported, while local Serb media called on people to turn out.

Early Sunday, the appeals seemed to have had an effect. Queues formed in front of polling stations in Pale, the hardliners' stronghold, while in Banja Luka, Ms. Plavsic's base, a group of students were standing in the rain waiting to vote.

"I came early because I was afraid of crowds. Even if my vote won't change much, I thought it was important," Sonja Radevic, a 22-year-old science student, said.

Bojan Petric, 46, said new parliament deputies should be elected "since those in the old parliament forgot their main duty, to

represent us, the citizens who elected them." Many in Banja Luka supported Ms. Plavsic's battle with the hardliners, accusing them of blocking the foreign aid needed for reconstruction of the war-shattered economy by their refusal to cooperate with international officials.

The hardliners have staunchly opposed attempts to allow refugees "ethnically cleansed" in the 43-month war to return home or to cooperate with Bosnia's joint institutions set up by the 1995 Dayton peace accords.

"Biljana Plavsic represents what the international community wants to see as a response to the peace process in Bosnia," OSCE official Javier Ruperez said.

Nonetheless the political battle which broke out in July has threatened to split the Bosnian Serb entity into two — with Ms. Plavsic controlling the west around Banja Luka and the hardliners the east around

Pale, east of Sarajevo.

Expelled from the hard-line Serb Democratic Party (SDS), Ms. Plavsic has formed her own party, the Serb Popular Alliance, for which these polls are the first electoral test.

Refugees, who fled or were expelled from the Republika Srpska, were also allowed to cast their vote either where they live now or at special polling stations in their place of origin.

However, in Sarajevo early Sunday few had turned out to cast their votes, although officials at polling stations said they hoped turnout would rise to about 50 per cent by the end of the day.

A total of 1.1 million voters were able to cast their ballots in 1,225 polling stations in both the Republika Srpska and elsewhere.

Polling stations opened at 8 a.m. (0700 GMT) Sunday and were set to close at 4 p.m. (1500 GMT). Results were not expected until next month.

Wei Jingsheng dismisses Beijing's overture to Taiwan

TAIPEI (AFP) — Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng Sunday snubbed China's "one country, two systems" formula which Beijing has proposed for reuniting Taiwan with the mainland, a report said here.

Mr. Wei, China's foremost dissident, said the formula had failed in both Tibet and Hong Kong, which returned to Chinese sovereignty on July 1.

"Just look at the fate of Tibet, then one will know for sure the possible results of adopting the 'one country, two systems' proposed by Beijing," Mr. Wei said in an exclusive interview in New York with the Taipei-based Chinese Television System.

"You don't think the 'one country, two system' has succeeded in Hong Kong, do you?" Mr. Wei asked.

Mr. Wei was freed by the Chinese authorities last week on medical parole and flew directly to the United States. Since his Nov. 16 arrival in the United States, Mr. Wei had been hospitalised in Detroit, Michigan, for hypertension,

chest pains, chronic bronchitis and poor nutrition.

Beijing has repeatedly offered to reunify with the island, which it regards as a breakaway province, under the formula designed to allow capitalist and Communist systems to co-exist.

But the proposal has been rejected by Taipei, which has ruled out the possibility of integration with the mainland unless both sides are put on an equal political footing.

He said the Communist Party seized power by violence and used the same brutal tactics to rule its citizens.

Mr. Wei said the Tiananmen Square massacre was testimony to his argument. Hundreds of students and workers were killed in 1989 when the People's Liberation Army used tanks to crush the pro-democracy demonstrations in the central Beijing square.

Mr. Wei said the "one country, two systems" idea would be merely a temporary solution to the Taiwan

issue, and insisted: "Chinese Communists will never share power."

He said Taiwan and China could eventually become close neighbours but not before there is a major political change on the mainland.

"The future of Taiwan is the future of China" and vice-versa, Mr. Wei said.

"Only after the whole of China becomes democratic and free" could Taiwan's existing democratic achievements be safeguarded, he asserted.

Taiwan is ruled by the Kuomintang (KMT), the nationalist party that fled to the island in 1949 when its troops were overrun by Communist forces on the mainland.

"There is a built-in democratic system within the KMT," Mr. Wei said. "Thus democracy has been arrived at only in the wake of struggles within the KMT framework."

"The Chinese Communist Party is not so, as it has been operating under an entirely different concept."

Italian PM's kidnapper nabbed after 19-year manhunt

ATHENS (AFP) — A former Italian extremist who was part of a gang which kidnapped and murdered former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro 19 years ago was arrested over the weekend in Greece, police here said Sunday.

Enrico Bianco, 45, a former member of the far-left Red Brigades movement, was nabbed late Saturday after police spotted him sailing in a northwest region across the Adriatic from Italy.

The police, who had been tipped off to his presence, found he was holding a false passport under the name of Fulvio Folini. He was transferred early Sunday to security headquarters in Athens.

The Greek police said Mr. Bianco often stayed in the region where he was arrested.

A police source said Mr. Bianco also owned an Athens apartment under his false name, frequently went to the central city of Patras on business and regularly travelled in Greece and France.

In a 1978 trial in his absence, an Italian court sentenced Mr. Bianco to 10 years in prison for taking part in the abduction and killing of Mr. Moro, who was then head of Italy's Christian Democrat party.

Some 20 other members of the gang were sentenced to life imprisonment for their involvement in the crime.

Mr. Moro, who had been several times prime minister between 1963 and 1976, had been seeking a rapprochement with the Communists to overcome Italy's enduring political and economic crises when he was kidnapped on March 9, 1978.

He was held in a Rome apartment and interrogated by his captors for 55 days before being shot dead.

Mario Moretti, a founding member of the Red Brigades and the mastermind behind the Moro kidnapping who is currently serving a life term in prison, said in a 1993 statement he had been the only person to kill Moro.

Rapper Coolio arrested in Germany

STUTTGART, Germany (R) — German police have arrested U.S. rap singer Coolio over allegations that a 29-year-old shopowner was punched in the stomach during an incident at a boutique, security sources said.

German police said they had arrested eight people Saturday over accusations that they had walked out of a shop in the southwestern town of Boeblingen Thursday wearing clothes for which they had not paid.

Security sources said the group included Coolio, the rapper known for international hits such as Gangsta's Paradise and Cu When U Get There.

Thursday, but formally arrested Saturday night after investigations revealed a "greater intensity of violence" than previously believed.

A judge had released him on increased bail of 100,000 marks (\$57,500). Other members of the group paid over 10,000 marks bail.

Taleban, Dostam exchange POWs

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's powerful Taleban militia and northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam have released nine prisoners through the mediation of the United Nations, a Taleban minister said Sunday.

Mulla Amir Khan Muttaqi, minister for information and culture, said the Taleban released five Dostam men from the militia's Kandahar base in return for the release of four Taleban soldiers.

The freed Taleban militiamen returned to Kandahar aboard a U.N. plane Saturday from northern Afghanistan, he said.

"There are no high-ranking officials among those released by the two sides," Mr. Muttaqi said, adding "we have promised to free their senior people, should they set free more of our prisoners."

The turbaned minister said an agreement had been reached with the rival

northern warlord to continue negotiations for the release of the remaining prisoners of war.

Last month Mr. Dostam unilaterally freed 120 prisoners from a jail in the northern town of Shiberghan.

Thousands of Taleban fighters were captured during their march into northern Afghanistan when ethnic Uzbek rival General Abdul Malik attacked them last May after breaking an alliance with them.

Mr. Dostam came back to his Mazar-i-Sharif stronghold in September after four months in exile in Turkey and started reclaiming his lost fiefdom.

Mr. Muttaqi said he did not have exact numbers of Taleban fighters held in the north as they were detained by numerous anti-Taleban factions including Malik's faction, Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat and forces of commander Ahmad Shah Masood.

Sri Lanka Buddhists reject ethnic peace plan

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka's influential Buddhist leadership Sunday reiterated its opposition to proposed constitutional reforms aimed at ending the long and bloody Tamil separatist war.

Leading monk Rambukwelle Vipassi, in remarks published in newspapers, said it was dangerous to devolve power when the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were still fighting.

"My view is that the war should end first and a political solution should come next," the high priest was quoted as saying in the Sunday Times. "It is dangerous to devolve power."

The Tamil Tigers have also rejected the radical power-sharing plan first unveiled by President Chandrika Kumaratunga in August 1995, describing the package as a "political conspiracy" by the majority Sinhalese.

The government aims to set up regional councils which will have greater authority over land and law and order and will be able to negotiate and receive direct foreign funding.

The Buddhist clergy had been divided on the reforms, which seek to turn the country into a de facto federal state in exchange for ethnic peace. But the latest rejection could strengthen religious hardliners, analysts said.

A panel called the "Sinhala Commission" appointed with

the blessing of the top Buddhist leadership had also rejected the devolution plan, which was presented in parliament last month.

It is expected to be debated next year but the ruling People's Alliance lacks the mandatory two-thirds majority to pass it and is banking on support from the opposition United National Party (UNP).

The UNP has also opposed the plan, prompting the government to warn that it will go directly to the people in a referendum to pressure the opposition to back the deal.

Another leading Buddhist monk, Madulurawe Sobitha, said the Sinhala Commission was not against the minority Tamil community and invited the minorities to join a struggle for economic justice.

"Successful governments since independence from Britain in 1948 have perpetuated economic injustices on our people be they, Sinhalese, Tamils or Muslims," Mr. Sobitha said. "We must unite to win jobs for our youth."

Sinhalese form about 74 per cent of the country's 18 million population. The Sinhala Commission said the reforms were detrimental to the Sinhalese and left the door open for the minority Tamils to break away and establish an independent state called Eelam.

More than 50,000 people have been killed in the Tamil separatist campaign since 1972.

Miss India, quoting Irish poet, wins Miss World

MAHE, Seychelles (R) — Miss India, a 24-year-old from Bombay called Diana Hayden, was crowned Miss World 1997 in the Seychelles late Saturday.

Quoting the Irish poet W.B. Yeats on her way to victory against 85 other beautiful women, Ms. Hayden won against first runner-up Laurelee Martinovich of New Zealand, 18, and second runner-up Jessica Motaung of South Africa, 24.

"The third time India has taken the Miss World title — yes," Ms. Hayden exclaimed after the gods had smiled on the Indian Ocean archipelago and stopped the day's tropical rain in time for the two-hour pageant on a beach.

"I've got some British blood somewhere down the line, ancestors. A few generations ago, probably about four or five," the five-foot-eight brunette said, explaining her untypical name.

Now working in celebrity management in Bombay, Ms. Hayden's boyfriend is 36-year-old Mark Cohen from Dublin.

But she denied that was why she quoted Yeats's line "in dreams begin responsibilities" when each of the 10 semi-finalists were invited to say a few words.

"I just read a lot," she said as fireworks exploded above her.

As the antithesis of an airhead, Ms. Hayden was exactly the kind of winner the Miss World Organisation and the Seychelles were looking for.

The profitable pageant begun by Eric Morley in 1951 is reinventing itself as a contest between intelligent young career women who just happen to be beautiful.

Protests by feminists threw the Miss World contest off-track in the 1980s, forcing it out of its regular venue in London's Albert Hall. A peripatetic period hit rock bottom in 1996, ironically in India, when Hindu fundamentalists and feminists staged demonstrations against the pageant in Bangalore.

The opposition was so intense that Mr. Morley and



Miss India Diana Hayden (centre) poses for photographers after winning the Miss World pageant with runners up Miss South Africa Jessica Motaung (left) and Miss New Zealand Laurelee Martinovich (right) (Reuters photo)

his wife Julia switched the swimsuit section of the competition to Seychelles last year, starting what could turn into a perfect match. The upmarket tourist islands will host next year's Miss World as well and are negotiating to extend the contract further.

"The people who weren't happy — it was very unfortunate," Ms. Hayden said of last year's angry passions at home.

"Thank God it went brilliantly tonight... India is going to be on top of the world."

Ms. Hayden wins about \$95,000 disbursed in chunks during her year as Miss World as well as holidays, jewellery and beauty products. Part of her job will be to promote the Seychelles who believe the Miss World

pageant can help attract more upmarket tourists from new markets in South America and Eastern Europe.

Surprisingly none of the 10 semi-finalists came from either of these regions despite popular enthusiasm there for the contest.

Organisers said the pageant would be broadcast in more than 140 countries.

Ms. Hayden said she planned to give some of the money to charity but added with a smile "I think I'm entitled to spend some on myself."

In a virtual clean sweep, she was earlier judged the most photogenic finalist and the one with the best swimsuit.

Miss New Zealand was awarded the Spectacular Costume Prize.

Thousands of refugees in Kenya stranded by floods

DADAB, Kenya (R) — Tens of thousands of refugees in remote north-eastern Kenya have deserted their camps after torrential rainfall in the past two weeks.

A Reuters journalist who visited the area Saturday found all 122,000 Somali, Ugandan, Ethiopian and Sudanese refugees had fled three camps in Garissa district for higher ground after their makeshift homes were swamped by up to a metre of water.

Aid officials said latrine pits had flooded, food stocks had been destroyed and shelters collapsed in the deluge.

All roads leading to the camps have been cut off in the flooding, they said. An aid team arrived in the area by small plane Saturday to investigate the damage.

The Kenyan government has already declared the area a disaster zone after nearly a month of heavier than normal rains.

The refugee camps in the

area have sprouted over the years and been bolstered by regular inflows of people escaping fighting in neighbouring countries.

Some refugees have lived in the camps for years.

Peter Kessler, a spokesman for the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR, said it would take at least a month for roads and bridges leading to the camps to be repaired.

"There is enough food and emergency rations to last until then, but the situ-

ation is very bad in other respects," he said.

A doctor with the Belgian branch of the international aid organisation Medicines sans Frontières (doctors without borders) told Reuters there was a very real risk of cholera or other diseases spreading.

"The water situation is bad and the sanitation is terrible," said Maria Rossi. "The situation is really out of hand."

Mr. Kessler said a special appeal would be made to

UNHCR headquarters for extra funds to help cope with the flooding.

Northeastern Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia have been particularly hard hit by heavy rains caused by the El Niño weather phenomenon in the past month.

Over 50 people have been killed in Kenya and millions of shillings of damage caused by rivers which have burst their banks or building collapsing because of rain-softened foundations.

Indian prime minister prepares for his fall

NEW DELHI (R) — India's ruling United Front appeared to be on the verge of collapse Sunday as Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral stood his ground in a war of nerves with the party that keeps the coalition in power.

Mr. Gujral will send a letter to the Congress party, which has provided crucial support to the coalition, rejecting its demand that he oust the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) party, a cabinet minister told Reuters.

"I (the letter) may go any time now. Most probably it will go today," said the cabinet minister from Mr. Gujral's Janata Dal party, who asked not to be named.

"By tonight it should go," he said.

Mr. Gujral, speaking at a function in Calcutta Saturday, said: "The election is round the corner."

The minister said Mr. Gujral's letter was expected to offer no room for compromise with the Congress party, which wants the DMK out after it was named in a report on the 1991 assassination of former Prime Minister and Congress leader Rajiv Gandhi.

Indian authorities blame Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger separatists for the assassination.

The DMK, which rules the southern state of Tamil Nadu, has rejected as "old wine in a new bottle" observations by retired judge Milap Chand Jain's one-man panel that its past support for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam had anything to do with the murder.

The LTTE have not accepted responsibility for the murder by a woman suicide bomber. Gandhi, as prime minister in 1987 sent his troops in to aid Colombo in a vain attempt to disarm the rebels.

The minister said Gujral's 15-party United Front was united in its decision to reject Congress's demand.

The minority alliance has so far ignored hints from the Congress party that it should join an expanded coalition without the DMK.

United Front leaders say Congress is raising the stakes because Sonia Gandhi, Rajiv's Italian-born widow, has signalled a willingness to campaign in the event of a mid-term poll.

"It is a direct confrontation. They (Congress) seem to have taken this decision two months back," the minister said.

Congress President Sitaram Kesri set an ultimatum, but no deadline, for the coalition ruling in a hung parliament formed after inconclusive general elections in 1996.

In April, Congress withdrew its support and renewed it only after the coalition replaced the then Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda with Mr. Gujral.

The restless Congress party, which has ruled India for all but four years since independence from Britain in 1947, is riven with internal rivalries. Its lawmakers, long used to power, are not content with backseat manoeuvres.

The United Front, which bunches free-marketers, communists and regional parties, has its roots in "anti-Congressism", a political ideology that emphasises regional autonomy and abhors the dominance of the Nehru-Gandhi political family.

N. Korea says U.S. troop pullout will be discussed at four-party talks

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea said Sunday it had agreed to take part in four-party peace talks in Geneva next month because it had been "promised" that the question of a withdrawal of U.S. troops from the South would be discussed.

"It has been promised that the talks will focus on the U.S. troop pullout and the conclusion of a peace agreement between the DPRK (North Korea) and the U.S., as we have demanded," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"That is why we agreed to hold the talks," the spokesman told the Korean Central News Agency monitored here.

The statement was the first reaction from Pyongyang to the landmark agreement reached in New York Friday to open the talks between the two Koreas, the United States and China in Geneva on Dec. 9.

"Thanks to our sincere efforts, confidence and political atmosphere for the four-party talks have been created," the spokesman said. The North will "do all we can to make the talks contribute to peace and stability," he added.

Before Friday's historic agreement was reached, South Korean Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-Ha said Pyongyang had understood discussion of the withdrawal of U.S. troops would not be on the talks agenda.

The U.S. and China have also jointly rebuffed any suggestion that a peace agreement should be signed by Washington and not between the two Koreas.

In their joint announcement in New York Friday, the four parties said the agenda would focus on "the establishment of the peace regime on the Korean Peninsula and issues concerning tension reduction there."

A senior U.S. official familiar with the talks told AFP Friday that the agenda was deliberately broad and would allow "any party to raise any issue." But the official added the "North Koreans came (to the Friday meeting) with the seriousness that had been absent from the last meeting" and that Pyongyang had dropped its demand that a U.S. troop withdrawal be included on the agenda.

The U.S. has 37,000 troops stationed in South Korea under the United Nations flag, with back-up from troops based in Japan — which has made Pyongyang extend its withdrawal call to include "all U.S. troops in Asia." The Geneva talks are designed to come up with a peace mechanism that would replace the uneasy truce that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

No peace treaty was signed in 1953 and the two

Koreas have remained locked in a costly cold war confrontation on either side of a tense demilitarised zone ever since.

The four-party formula was proposed in April 1996 by U.S. President Bill Clinton and South Korean President Kim Young-Sam, who said at the time that the offer was unconditional.

The last of two preparatory talks sessions in New York in September broke down over the North's insistence on prior pledges of massive food aid, and that the U.S. troop withdrawal issue be high on the agenda.

Pyongyang has for the past three years been dependent on foreign aid for food and fuel for its 22 million people, many of whom are reportedly on the brink of starvation.

U.S. officials have cautioned the talks could take years because of the brinkmanship and deep mis-

trust on both sides, with some saying Pyongyang agreed only because of the worsening food shortages.

"There will be many sessions over a period of at least a few years... believing we could get it done in a few months would be foolish," said one U.S. official in New York.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright agreed, calling North Korea's agreement to take part the start of "a long road."

But she also voiced hope for the negotiations. "Success is in the interest of all the parties as it is in the region and the world as a whole," she said.

Seoul has welcomed the North's decision, pledging "utmost efforts" for their success. And Sunday it said it would give the Red Cross the green light to open new food aid talks.

'Cambodian civil war escalating'

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's civil war is escalating with fighting now taking place in seven of the country's 21 provinces, exiled opposition leaders said in a statement received here Sunday.

The clashes are underway in all provinces along the Thai border, from Koh Kong in the southwest to Preah Vihear in the north, they said.

Forces loyal to strongman Hun Sen are battling troops under exiled co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh, as well as the Khmer Rouge rebel movement which has struck an alliance with the

royalists.

Khmer Nation Party leader Sam Rainsy and royalist FUNCINPEC party MP Ahmad Yahya said their forces were advancing again "because of the unpopularity of the coup leader." The forces were driven to the border areas following Second Prime Minister Hun Sen's ouster of Prince Ranariddh in two days of fighting in the capital in July.

However, the two exiles noted years of military conflict here amid pledges to wipe out foes from various camps had failed and said only a political solution

would end the Cambodian quagmire.

"The escalating war will be devastating if a political settlement is not reached very rapidly," they added in a statement from Tokyo, which they are visiting to lobby Japan to increase pressure on Hun Sen.

Their statement could not be independently verified and observers noted both sides have made false claims as part of their propaganda efforts. Both sides have also been accused of human rights violations as they skirmish in the remote border areas.

So-called 'Kennedy papers' are forgeries — CBS

NEW YORK (R) — The entire collection of papers allegedly linking President John Kennedy to everything from the mafia to hush money paid to Marilyn Monroe is fake, according to an expert hired by CBS news' "60 minutes."

The papers, which Lex Cusack said he discovered among the files of his late father, Lawyer Lawrence Cusack, include more than 300 documents allegedly revealing among other things that Kennedy had an affair with Monroe and planned to buy the movie star's silence for \$600,000, and that his family had an illicit relationship with mafia boss Sam Giancana.

Mr. Cusack sold the papers for some \$6 million, CBS reported in Sunday's edition

of "60 minutes."

ABC, which had been preparing a two-hour documentary based on the collection, hired forensic experts to validate seven typewritten documents and was told they were forged. It cancelled the show.

Similarly, Seymour Hersh had a chapter in his just published book "The Dark Side of Camelot" devoted to the papers, but removed it amid a barrage of media reports branding the collection a fake.

Mr. Cusack then offered CBS access to all of the original papers, since no one had examined more than a few of some 700 pages of handwritten documents. The network hired Dr. Duayne Dillon, who it said was one of the top document and handwriting experts in the country and was

recommended by the FBI, to review the entire collection.

Dr. Dillon concluded that the handwriting in the papers "is not the writing of President Kennedy," and said all the documents were forgeries. For one thing, they "do not show the freedom of line movement that you see in normal handwriting," he said.

Looking closely at the documents, it can also be seen that typographical errors were lifted off the page and retyped. But that system of correcting mistakes did not exist on typewriters until well after the deaths of both Kennedy and Monroe in the early 1960s.

As to letters allegedly from Monroe, Dr. Dillon said: "I'd say that those are poor, poor forgeries."

Mr. Cusack, interviewed on the programme, said Dr. Dil-

lon was not a Kennedy handwriting expert and referred the network to Robert White, who he said was Mr. White however turned out to be a collector of Kennedy memorabilia.

"I don't have any forensic knowledge on handwriting analysis at all," he told CBS. He said he once gave the opinion that some of the handwriting looked like Kennedy's, but he no longer thinks that.

"These documents now have what we call in the marketplace, the kiss of death. They're forgeries," Mr. White said.

Mr. Cusack said Mr. White backed off his certification because he was afraid of being sued.

Mr. Cusack, along with partner Thomas Cloud, a dealer in diamonds, gold and documents, have filed a \$100 mil-

lion defamation lawsuit against ABC and other media outlets over the forgery allegations.

"We have 12 other leading document experts... who have the experience behind the Kennedy papers to know that, that say they are not (forged)," Mr. Cusack said.

But CBS said at least nine of the 12 have withdrawn their authorisation, with two saying they were tricked into giving their authorisation. Two handwriting experts are on record saying the papers are authentic, but one is dead and the other is his widow, CBS reported.

A federal grand jury is investigating whether fraud was committed in the sale of the JFK papers to some 140 investors.

Italian PM kidnapper nabbed after 19-year manhunt

ATHENS (AFP) — A kidnapper of an Italian politician was nabbed after a 19-year manhunt.

Minister Aldo Moro was kidnapped in 1978 by the Red Brigades, a far-left militant group.

He was held for 55 days and released in 1979.

The kidnapper, Francesco Bontade, was arrested Sunday.

He was charged with the kidnapping of Moro.

Bontade was 57 years old.

He was born in Sicily.

He was a member of the Red Brigades.

He was arrested in his home in Sicily.

He was charged with the kidnapping of Moro.

He was charged with the kidnapping of Moro.

He was charged with the kidnapping of Moro.

Taiwan PM kidnapped after 19-year manhunt

TAIPEI (AFP) — A kidnapper of a Taiwanese politician was nabbed after a 19-year manhunt.

Minister Chen Sheng-shung was kidnapped in 1978 by the Red Brigades, a far-left militant group.

He was held for 55 days and released in 1979.

The kidnapper, Francesco Bontade, was arrested Sunday.

He was charged with the kidnapping of Chen.

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He was charged with the kidnapping of Chen.

China PM kidnapped after 19-year manhunt

BEIJING (AFP) — A kidnapper of a Chinese politician was nabbed after a 19-year manhunt.

Minister Li Peng was kidnapped in 1978 by the Red Brigades, a far-left militant group.

He was held for 55 days and released in 1979.

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Rapper Coolio arrested in Germany

COLOGNE (AFP) — American rapper Coolio was arrested in Germany on Sunday.

He was charged with possession of a handgun.

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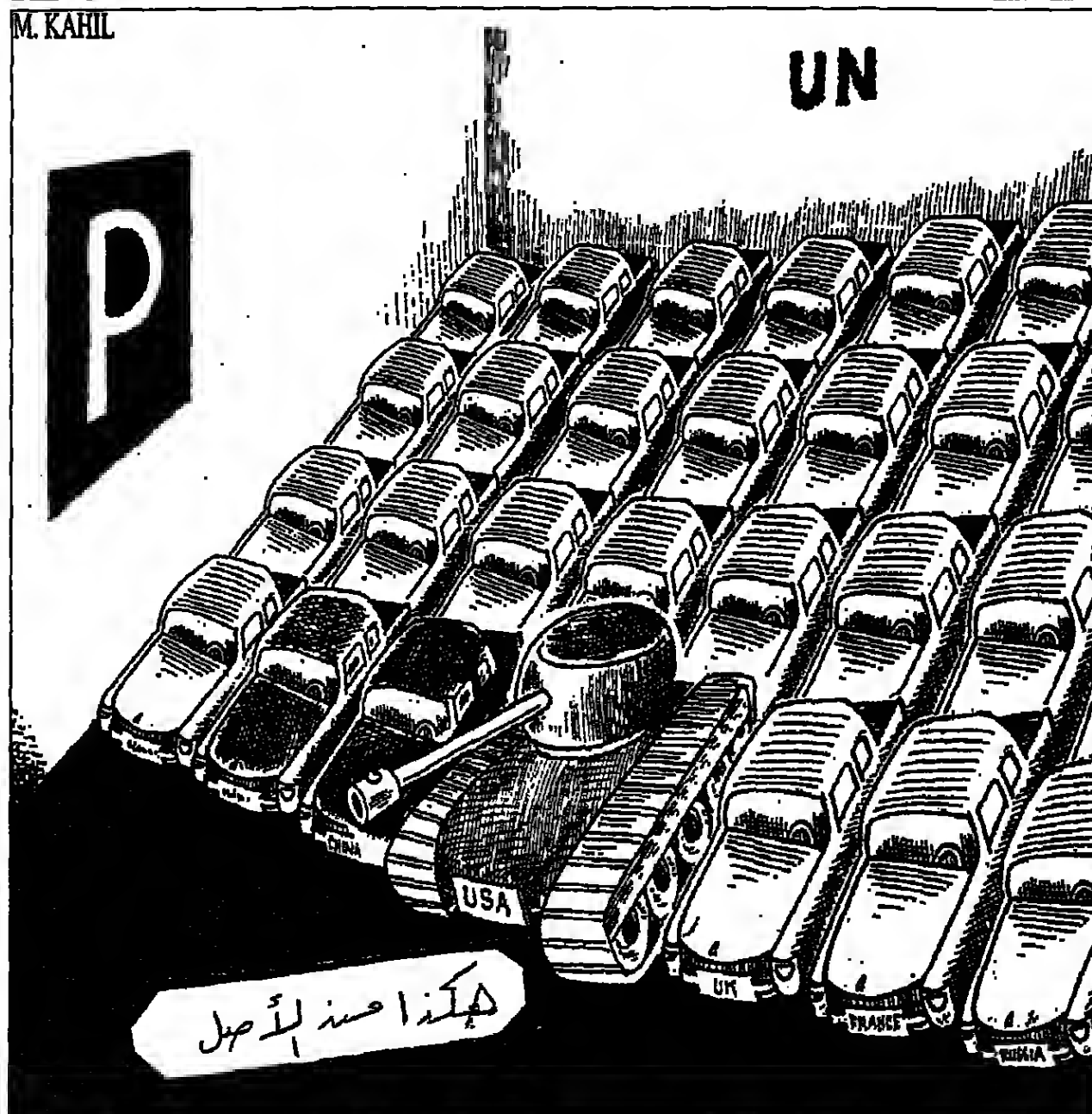
ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai's Fahed Fanek criticised the government's measures in dealing with the inefficiency of the public administration system. Noting that the government has announced a plan to encourage civil servants to ask for retirement by offering them five annual increments to be added to their monthly salary so that their pension can be calculated accordingly, the writer said that with this move the government is causing the efficient employees who have spent long years in service to retire. But he said that by doing this the government is leaving in office employees with little experience who cannot shoulder heavy responsibility. The writer said the government should resort to laying off those employees who are unproductive and not those with good work experience. He said the new government measure will encourage only the experienced to quit and find jobs in the private sector resulting in a public administration system that will be less efficient than it presently is. The government, Dr. Fanek said, has the right to introduce sound measures to deal with the public administration's inefficiency but it is not its right to further complicate the situation and leave a new problem to the subsequent governments.

The incentive to cheat for the fruit vendor is that the seller is not worried about establishing a reputation. The person may easily relocate since movement is almost costless and all goods are on the van already. This ability to relocate the enterprise provides the seller with a disincentive to be honest and renders any formal contract weak. (This is probably one reason the gypsies were always mistrusted, once the item was bought it could not be

Cheating reduces the size and scope of transactions. Dealing with cheating from one angle alone is not the right approach. A comprehensive policy must be adopted to address all types of cheating. Clearly the development of an optimal policy that deals with this phenomenon requires that the interrelations among the economic, social, cultural, and political factors that characterise the economy are accounted for.

The latest deliberations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights attest to this unfortunate fact. It seems that many nations refuse to draw a distinction between the Iraqi regime and the innocent people. The U.S. will continue to call all the shots when it comes to dealing with Baghdad for as long as one can tell. Even after Russia brokered the latest settlement of the Iraqi conflict, the U.S. remained defiant and refused any notion of a quid pro quo with Iraq in return for its willingness to allow all the U.N. inspection team into the country to carry on their mandate. The chief of National Security Council at the White House even threatened to deploy the U.S. veto power to block the implementation of any Russian-Iraqi deal. This suggests that the Iraqi case has still a long way before it can be resolved fairly and justly.

Leiv K. Herheim
Amman

s, Monday, November 24, 1997
man Rights File
questioning Iraq on
ligations to ICESC
was poor timing

By Walid M. Nadi
VANCOUVER — Since she became U.S. Secretary of State last January, many have mused about Madeleine Albright's evolving warm relationship with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov.
She made the four former intelligence chief laugh, conversed easily with him in Russian and even brought him as her date to a major Washington social event.
But there's never been any illusion about the often competing national interests they both represent, and that was never truer than last Thursday when the two squared off over Iraq in the cavernous marble U.N. chamber in Geneva.
Mr. Primakov helped defuse the crisis over Iraq's latest refusal to comply with U.N. Security Council mandates.
U.N. inspectors charged with destroying Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons returned to work on Friday, three weeks after Baghdad expelled the Americans among them, provoking the showdown.
Based on U.S. accounts, Ms. Albright played a key role in ensuring the major powers — Britain, France, Russia, China and the United States — stayed united in their core demands.
There was an embarrassing stumble when an aide described U.S.-British ideas for expanding the U.N. oil-for-food humanitarian programme as a "little carrot" to get Iraq to end the crisis and some news accounts suggested Washington was negotiating with Baghdad.
In fact, U.S. officials say "modest adjustments" can occur only after Iraq is back in compliance on U.N. inspections and that the programme's main aim is to preserve sanctions on Iraq by undercutting the claim that sanctions hurt innocent people.
Despite this, Ms. Albright seems to have weathered this first major crisis reasonably well, although Iraq remains a long-term challenge and stalled Mideast peace negotiations continue to seriously undermine broader U.S. policy in the region.
"This is not a Russian trap," Mr. Primakov reportedly told Ms. Albright in Geneva as his frustration grew over her insistence on amending the text of a joint statement he proposed.
In fact, U.S. officials say, if they accepted Mr. Primakov's language as is, the council's permanent five members would have left wide room for Iraq to claim victory.
Instead, Ms. Albright insisted on changes that allow Baghdad — and Russia and France who favour easing sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait — a scant wiggle room.
The drama played out over seven days of intense diplomacy as the U.S. was building up its armed forces in the Gulf to reinforce a threat of military action if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein continued to obstruct the U.N. inspectors.
Most major allies and many other key countries opposed using force and felt Washington was too keen for that option.
U.S. officials believe Russia and France enthused President Hussein by abstaining last month on a U.N. vote on Iraq. Given this, and the special ties Moscow and Paris have with Baghdad, Washington urged both to take the lead in a peaceful solution.
Mr. Primakov, an Arabist, hosted a top Iraqi official in Moscow, proposed ways to meet Baghdad's concerns on sanctions, declared he had a plan to end the crisis and called the Geneva meeting of the Security Council's five permanent members.
Ms. Albright, meanwhile, jettisoned her original travel plans to cross the Gulf to try and rebuild the frayed coalition that stood firm against Iraq during the 1991 Gulf war.
She held dozens of telephone calls with her Russian, French and British counterparts, reminding them Iraq lost the war and could not be allowed to change the ceasefire terms.
She spelled out U.S. "red lines" in a diplomatic settlement and warned Mr. Primakov Washington would not be bound by any deals he negotiated with Baghdad. U.N. inspectors must be allowed to return to Iraq without conditions, she insisted.
Ms. Albright and Mr. Primakov duelled long-distance over changing their respective travel plans so the Geneva meeting could be held. Some aides believe Mr. Primakov preferred she not attend to improve chances of a joint statement more favourable to Iraq.
But he finally delayed his departure from Geneva to Brazil when Ms. Albright offered to fly all night after talks in New Delhi for a bizarrely-timed 2 a.m. ministerial session.
As the meeting began, Mr. Primakov read a one-page joint statement and said if the others approved it, he was sure Iraq would readmit the U.N. inspectors, officials said.
Ms. Albright refused to adopt anything she had not read. The U.S. team, armed with a laptop computer, translated from Russian to English the one page Mr. Primakov brought with him and made copies for all the participants. The debate began.
Two hours later, after the statement was tightened and agreed to, the Americans were ready for Iraq to renege on its pledge to Mr. Primakov to let U.N. inspectors back in. But Baghdad, perhaps seeing no other option and trusting Russia to exercise later more clout in seeking to end sanctions, followed through.

LETTERS
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News

In the end it was Iraq versus U.N., Albright versus Primakov

By Carol Giacomo
VANCOUVER — Since she became U.S. Secretary of State last January, many have mused about Madeleine Albright's evolving warm relationship with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov.
She made the four former intelligence chief laugh, conversed easily with him in Russian and even brought him as her date to a major Washington social event.
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U.S. demands access to Iraq's presidential palaces

(Continued from page 1)
co-ordinated influence of France, Britain and Russia — had to soften the position it took on the Iraq crisis," Mr. Jospin said.
He said the U.N. had not given in to any of Iraq's demands and added: "We have avoided the risk of a conflict."
The prime minister, whose government has said Iraq needed "a light at the end of the tunnel," said the Security Council should offer Baghdad "the perspective of a change in its situation if it fulfils the U.N. conditions."
"I think that if this works out positively, as I hope it will, it will be a good success for Europe, for its capacity to influence events and for reason itself," he said.
Security Council divided
The U.N. Security Council on Saturday was seriously divided over Iraqi disarmament after Russia failed to speed the lifting of sanctions on Baghdad.
Following tense discussions notably involving France and Russia on the one hand, and the United States and Britain on the other, the 15-member Security Council put off until Monday further consideration of a report by a U.N. panel of international experts.
As details of Friday's marathon expert meeting emerged, U.N. diplomats expressed concern that Russia had attempted to completely overhaul the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), acting on behalf of Iraq.
"There was an attempt to hijack the Commission for political purposes," a Western diplomat said.
Russia put forward a package of proposals reflecting Iraqi views at Friday's meeting, which were mainly rebuffed by the 15 other experts on UNSCOM's advisory board.
The meeting was called at Russian urging to discuss how to enhance UNSCOM's effectiveness

Association agreement with EU to be signed today

(Continued from page 1)
benefit from the new competitive climate brought about by the agreement, said the minister.
Dr. Khalaf noted that the economic reform programme Jordan adopted in 1989 has achieved both financial and monetary stability and thus created a suitable investment climate which will provide more guarantees for foreign investors under the agreement.
The increase of direct foreign investments into Jordan is expected to facilitate the transfer of technology, increase productivity, and render Jordan's industrial products more competitive in international markets, said Dr. Khalaf.
Jordan's successful implementation of the economic reform programme will also maximise its benefits from the agreement," the minister added.
The agreement will help Jordan establish economic relations with countries of the world in a period characterised by policies of economic liberalisation in different countries, Dr. Khalaf said.
The agreement, which is expected to be ratified one year after the signing, will be signed by Dr. Khalaf, Mr. Poos and Vice President of the European Commission Manóel Marín.

Aziz voices Iraq's appreciation of Jordan's role in resolving crisis

(Continued from page 1)
intervene and offer solutions" if there were no change," he asked.
On his arrival here on Saturday, Mr. Aziz criticised UNSCOM's performance in Iraq and said its behaviour "was incompatible with a U.N. institution."
He said that the UNSCOM was deliberately procrastinating procedures aiming at harming Iraq's security.
Although Mr. Aziz had said in an interview with Jordan Television that he did not expect that the sanctions on Iraq would be lifted soon, he insisted during the meeting with Jordanian journalists that the Iraqi cause was "now clearer to the world and to member states in the Security Council."
On Sunday, around 100 leading politicians and public figures left Amman for Baghdad in a show of support with the Iraqi people.
Representatives of more than 15 political parties are expected to meet with Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Rantadan and other Iraqi officials as part of "popular diplomacy" efforts aimed at "standing against an eventual military attack against the beleaguered country," according to Salem Nahhas, secretary general of the leftist Popular Democratic party, Hashd.
The delegation, which before leaving met with Arab diplomats at the Egyptian and Syrian embassies in Amman, will deliver a shipment of pharmaceuticals to the Iraqi people.
Following their four-day visit to Iraq, the leading figures will pay similar visits to Syria, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates in a bid to "close the gaps in Arab viewpoints and muster wider support for the Iraqi people."

Brotherhood crisis could lead to creation of new party

(Continued from page 1)
50-year old Muslim Brotherhood have widened since Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994.
Though unified in their opposition to the peace deal, Islamists started differing on how to combat normalisation with the Jewish state.
While moderates started advocating participation in coalition governments to contain normalisation, hardliners considered the abrogation of the peace accord a pre-requisite to joining any Cabinet.
Rejecting the notion of a crisis between doves and hawks, worsened by the boycott resolution, Mr. Abo Bakr said: "We are all moderates in the Brotherhood, and this is our general principle."
Jordan allowed the Brotherhood to operate under charity rules in the early 1940s and in the 1950s it helped the state to counter the influence of the then-banned pan-Arab and communist movements.
Over the years, it has cooperated with the regime at many critical stages in the King-
dom's history, as King Hussein recently remarked.
Some analysts believe the boycott decision could be part of a 'gentlemen's agreement' under which the Brotherhood would stay out of Parliament to avoid ratification of possible accords under the framework of the Arab-Israeli final status negotiations.
These analysts argue that, being out of Parliament, the Brotherhood could keep out of the final status negotiations, that might be unfavourable to the Palestinians.
The Brotherhood, however, firmly rejected the existence of any deal with the government.
"There is no deal between us and the government... We believe that the government is actually interested in our participation in the country's political life," Mr. Abu Bakr said.
"We expect the final status negotiations to be unfair to the Palestinians, and believe that everything that has been signed between Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis is not fair," he added.
The movement's 17 deputies in the previous Lower House voted against the ratification of the 1994 peace treaty.
The Brotherhood listed the peace treaty and normalisation, as well as the one-person, one-vote system and controversial amendments to the Press and Publications Law, as the reasons prompting their boycott decision.
In interviews and columns in the local press, Dr. Emmtoush has challenged the movement's decision as inadequate and illogical.
Dr. Emmtoush said the Brotherhood should have called on its deputies to resign when Parliament endorsed the peace treaty. He also said the Brotherhood took part in the 1993 elections, also held under the same law, and questioned whether public freedoms were any more respected back at that time.

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Jordan-EU accord seen posing major challenge to industry

my and the government-sponsored five-year socio-economic plan to stimulate the economy.

He lauded the Jordanian government's efforts to raise the rate of economic growth and reduce inflation saying that Japan will help Jordan to continue to achieve positive results through further economic assistance to the coun-

He said Japan is committed to continuing its aid to Jordan in appreciation of the country's endeavours in the Middle East peace process. He indicated that Japan in 1995 granted Jordan 3.3 billion Japanese yen but the amount was raised to five billion in 1996 and could reach three billion in 1997.

Jordanian businesses are torn between hopes the accord will bring European multinationals along with access to European markets, and fears that a gradual lifting of tariffs will deal a crippling blow to an industrial sector long dependent on import substitution protectionism and the captive Iraqi market.

Some believe most benefits will go to European firms which will expand their markets in a region nearer to their domestic market than Asia.

tioned immediately when it comes into effect. Other EU goods will still be charged tariffs for between two, to five years from the date the accord comes into effect on Jan. 1, 1999 to allow Jordanian products to adjust to EU competition.

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1997
By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

UNDP, P.O. Box 35286, Amman 11180 Jordan

CONGRATULATIONS

45 Some berths	54 Party treat
46 Regret	55 Lamb
47 Raid	56 Frost or Kilmer
50 Grouch	57 Unconscious state
51 Protuberant	58 Remarkable feat
52 Cheer up	62 Feline
53 Light producing device	

GOING UP SIR!

UP OR DOWN IT DOESN'T MATTER!

WHAT FLOOR SIR?

NO FLOOR! THE DOCTOR JUST TOLD ME TO KEEP MY FOOT ELEVATED!

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Answer: What p
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OROSCOPE

FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1997
Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Each 21 to April 19: Bring your talent to the fore. You will be the most influential person in the room. Use your influence to advance your cause. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

April 20 to May 20: Be alert to what is going on around you today and seize the opportunity to advance your cause. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

May 21 to June 21: Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

June 22 to July 21: Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

July 22 to August 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

August 22 to September 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

September 22 to October 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

October 22 to November 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

November 22 to December 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

December 22 to January 21: You can do it. Give some attention to the material which will be appreciated and rewarded back in increased affection for you. Make the right arrangements for the future. You can do it.

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Government expects revenues to cover JD1.95b of JD1.98b budget for '98

IT HAS been learnt from government sources that the 1998 budget will amount to JD1.98 billion for recurrent and capital spending. The figure is JD64 million higher than the 1997 budget which totalled JD1.92 billion. The general revenues were estimated at JD1.95 billion, JD 90 million above the JD1.86 billion expected for 1997.

Accordingly, the budget deficit envisaged for 1998 is about JD30 million. The capital spending for 1998 will be higher when compared to recurrent spending, the sources said. They added that the prime minister has asked the ministers during the initial discussion of the draft budget not to propose any increase or reduction in the budget figures except after studies and convincing recommendations to the Cabinet.

The 1998 budget is different than previous ones as it includes for the first time independent budget for each of the government departments in the Kingdom. Such a step was taken within the government's policy to implement decentralisation in both the administrative and development fields.

The government sources denied that the 1998 budget includes any annual raises for employees similar to those that were contained in previous budgets (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaj).

Cabinet authorises ministry to specify price ceiling for meat, milk

THE COUNCIL of Ministers has authorised the ministry of supply to specify price ceilings for refrigerated fresh imported meat and locally-slaughtered (imported) meat as well as cow milk, yoghurt and labaneh. The council also approved floating the prices of rice, sugar and yellow corn. Industry, trade and supply minister indicated that all sale prices of the items mentioned will be under the present announced price ceiling.

The ministry will ensure that prices do not exceed the level by intervening directly through putting on the market the necessary amounts that are stored at the government warehouses.

This step comes after the success of the experiment of substituting food subsidy with cash subsidy without causing any increase in the prices of these products. The minister of industry, trade and supply indicated that the cash subsidy will continue next year under the same mechanism that was used in the last quarter of 1997 (Al Aswaj).

Club intensifies work to promote business capabilities for women

By Suha Ma'ayeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a bid to assist women entrepreneurs in preparing business plans and applying proper methods to handle businesses, the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) will be launching a series of training courses in December. BPWC Director Rasha Barghouti told the Jordan Times Sunday.

"The training courses are open not only to women who run their own business or qualify in professional occupations, but also to any women who are not professional or involved in any business," said Ms. Barghouti.

A three-day workshop will be designed for each training session. The courses will include accounting, computer skills, the use of the Internet and writing a feasibility study.

Ms. Barghouti highlighted the establishment of the Business Incubator for Small Enterprises, a micro facility with a small management staff that provides the physical work space, shared facilities and access to technical and business support services to professionals to help overcome management shortcomings.

She pointed out that "there are twelve cubicles or work stations and twelve women can be trained at any one time on how to start a business."

The business incubator was established in cooperation with UNIFEM's regional office in Amman and funded by a Japanese grant.

The BPWC director pointed out that prior to establishing a business, most women need to be aware of the marketing strategy, accounting system for the products, pricing and writing a feasibility study.

She hoped that in the future the BPWC will try to be a mediator between women entrepreneurs and credit departments of banks since "it's difficult for women to approach a bank and get a loan like men," said Ms. Barghouti.

Meanwhile, Ms. Barghouti emphasised the need to encourage women to acquire education and occupational training and to use their capacities to improve and enhance their role in society.

"There are many accumulated problems in Jordan arising from women abuse, divorce and children custody," added Ms. Barghouti. "Women need to be financially independent in order to stand on their feet."

She mentioned that ninety per cent of women who seek divorce cannot obtain it due to financial problems. "Divorced or not, women should be income-generating in order to help control family problems," Ms. Barghouti stressed.

Moreover, she said the BPWC, through the legal counselling centre, endeavours to pursue the problems that touch the legal aspects of family situations. The problems are dealt with cautiously according to the needs of each situation.

The counselling centre tries to provide women with solutions in order to retain their dignity.

"For very needy women, a survey for the social status will be conducted and the BPWC will take that case to the court," she revealed that between 800-1000 women annually seek the advice of the counselling centre.

Besides court cases, Ms. Barghouti noted that the counselling centre is always conducting awareness lectures, mainly for housewives, in different social development centres.

She confirmed that women will be informed of their rights and duties and they will be acquainted with different issues and laws, such as the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Ms. Barghouti said that "seminars, awareness lectures, and regular panel discussions by lecturers are part of the cultural activities for women to be informed about current issues on the national and international level."

Asked about BPWC's recent achievements and activities, Ms. Barghouti said that the latest project was entitled "A grassroots Project Promoting Women's Equal Access to Parliament Election 1997" (Voters & Candidates) which focused on educating women in the disciplinary field of democracy and decision making and increasing women's representation and participation in politics.

This project was funded by the European Union and the Canadian Embassy.

Meanwhile, she pointed out that the Information and Documentation Centre for Women Studies, a department of the BPWC, is a subscriber in "Global One," an international telecommunications company. Also, this centre aims at automating libraries and computerising information.

Saudi prince weighs investing in Jordan

By Mahmoud Masharqa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Saudi Prince Talal Bin Bandar Ben Saad Sunday expressed interest in launching tourism, agricultural and commercial projects in the Kingdom, particularly in Aqaba and the Dead Sea areas.

In a press statement after visiting the Investment Promotion Corporation (IPC), Prince Talal announced that the purpose of his visit to Jordan was to acquaint himself with the incentives offered by the government to foreign investors as well as the new investment legislations.

"It is time to invest in Jordan," the prince said stressing that the steps towards launching investments will be encouraged.

In reply to a question about his intended projects, the prince said: "The projects are still being studied, but the priority will be given to launching hotels and recreational projects in the Dead Sea area and the Aqaba region after it is converted into a free zone."

"Projects for raising livestock will also be founded soon in Jordan," said the prince who met with the IPC Director General Montaser Uqlah.

Prince Talal stressed that the construction of an industrial wharf in Aqaba is going to attract promising investments.

Dr. Uqlah said Jordan has done all its best to improve the investment climate in order to attract foreign investors to launch projects in the Kingdom, pointing to the recent government decision to add constructing conference centres and tourism recreation centres to the list of projects benefiting from the Investment Promotion Law.

Dr. Uqlah also added that the government intends to add constructing commercial complexes to the list.

Asfour quits ACC board

AMMAN (J.T.) — Mohammad Asfour, a member of the Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC), Sunday submitted his resignation from the board.

Mr. Asfour said in a press conference that another ACC board member has frankly and openly confessed during an official board meeting on Oct. 11, 1997, that the 1994 ACC elections were forged.

Mr. Asfour said: "After three years of the mandate of the current board, I resign having found out that the ACC results of the 1994 elections were forged and fraud."

REUTERS The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7385	0.5903	1.4124	126.00	1.4173	1705.00	1.9590	5.8190
DE Mark	0.5752	-	0.3393	0.8124	72.48	0.6150	880.45	1.1288	3.3470
GB Sterling	1.6940	2.9435	-	2.3992	212.04	2.4009	2888.27	3.3185	9.8574
CH Franc	0.7080	1.2300	0.4174	-	88.19	1.0028	1206.31	138.67	4.1170
JP Yen	0.0079	1.3787	0.4679	1.1201	-	1.1239	12.52	155.35	4.6146
CA Dollar	0.7086	1.2327	0.4178	1.0011	1.12	-	1207.48	1.3885	4.1287
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0191	0.3458	0.8028	1354.83	0.8308	-	11.48	3.4109
NL Guilder	0.5105	88.72	0.3011	72.10	64.29	0.7233	870.12	-	2.9696
FR Franc	0.1719	0.2987	0.1014	24.2639	21.83	0.2435	33.65	33.8500	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	0.7085	2.7503	0.3770	3.6400	0.3035	3.6728	1524.00	3.4010
Jordan Dinar	1.4114	-	5.2933	0.5321	5.1376	0.4283	5.1638	2151.02	4.8003
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1889	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0809	0.98	406.37	0.9069
Bahraini Dinar	2.85	1.8784	9.8480	-	9.86	0.8049	9.74	4042.53	9.0215
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1946	1.0303	1.0303	-	0.0834	1.01	418.68	0.9343
Kuwait Dinar	3.2954	2.3348	12.3589	1.2423	12.00	-	12.10	5022.24	0.9343
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1929	1.0211	0.1026	0.9911	0.0826	-	414.94	0.9260
Lebanese L1000	0.66	0.4649	2.4608	0.2474	2.3885	0.1991	2.4100	-	2.2316
Egyptian	0.2940	0.2083	1.1027	0.1108	1.1073	0.0892	1.0799	448.10	-

Energy				
Oil	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Brent	19.11	19.04	-	-
WTI	16.73	19.14	-	-
Bahny	19.11	19.04	-	-
Dubai	17.90	17.90	-	-
UL Gas	183.00	187.00	-	-

Metal Prices				
Metal	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Gold (oz's)	304.6	305.1	-	-
Silver (oz's)	5.26	5.28	-	-
Platinum (oz's)	399	391	-	-
Al (3 Months)	1080	1012	-	-
CU (3 Months)	1860	1864	-	-
Zinc (3 Months)	1219	1221	-	-
Lead (3 Months)	568	572	-	-
Ni (3 Months)	6250	6270	-	-

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)				
Period	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
USD	5.58	5.75	5.78	5.81
GBP	7.36	7.84	7.87	7.87
JPY	0.35	0.15	0.20	0.59
DEM	3.40	3.65	3.76	3.86
FRF	3.54	3.59	3.74	3.87
CHF	1.43	1.61	2.00	2.00
ITL	6.35	6.22	5.90	5.63

JOD Cross Rates				
Currency	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	-	-
GB Sterling	1.1954	1.2044	-	-
DE Mark	0.4087	0.4087	-	-
CH Franc	0.8008	0.8033	-	-
FR Franc	0.1215	0.1221	-	-
JP Yen	0.5809	0.5837	-	-
NL Guilder	0.381	0.3828	-	-
IT Lira	0.4147	0.4168	-	-

Energy				
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price
Coffee (c/lb)	Spot	157.67	-	-
Cocoa (c/lb)	Spot	1803	-	-
Sugar (c/lb)	Spot	301.6	-	-
Wheat (c/lb)	Spot	127	-	-
Soy (c/lb)	Spot	25.23	-	-
Tea (c/lb)	Spot	155	-	-
Barley (c/lb)	Spot	0	-	-
Rice (c/lb)	Spot	370	-	-

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHARISAM
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 23/11/1997

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV. %	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
346,000	246,500	ARAB BANK	15.2	1.21	5	140	46360	331.00	331.00
N 2,340	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	26	51950	97147	1.87	1.87
S 3,600	1,950	BANK OF JORDAN	6.2	0.00	12	1050	2069	1.97	1.97
1,150	890	ATL. EAST JVF. BK.	70.9	0.00	12	12500	13615	2.09	2.09
2,680	2,150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.3	6.11	7	3100	8050	2.60	2.59
S 5,200	4,600	THE HOUSING BK.	15.4	3.77	7	2106	10794	5.10	5.15
4,180	2,030	JOR. REAL ESTATE BANK	10.7	0.00	6	100	200	1.04	1.04
1,050	740	JOR. GULF BANK	4.6	9.09	3	6200	4774	78	77
S 4,050	2,900	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.0	3.25	16	2763	11074	2.93	2.95
3,900	2,900	JOR. INTL. BANK	24.4	0.00	2	10355	10455	3.30	3.27
1,900	870	BEIT AL-HAL (REITWA)	6	16.67	2	1000	900	1.90	1.90

2.050	1.550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.3	5.21	5	2116	5979	1.92	1.92	-
1.030	1.220	TRIO ELECTRICITY	17.5	3.91	2	6600	19794	3.09	2.94	-15-
1.550	.930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	2	500	585	1.17	1.17	-
1.010	.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.6	6.59	1	1500	1365	.91	.91	-
.510	.480	JORDAN TWEL. TRAD.	6.9	0.00	2	1560	780	.52	.52	-
8.900	6.700	ALFAA	14.7	4.10	1	800	812	1.02	1.02	01+
1.680	1.150	MIL. EAST TOOLS	19.8	0.00	5	1158	1158	1.29	1.30	01+
3.900	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.7	0.00	2	1000	3710	3.71	2.71	-
1.050	.850	JORDAN EXP. INV.	10.5	0.00	1	1750	858	49	49	04-
1.100	.900	SARFA EDUCATION	9	0.00	1	100	98	.97	.98	04+

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Pierce, Novotna advance to WTA Championship final

NEW YORK (AFP) — Seventh-seed Mary Pierce of France, who ended top seed Martina Hingis' season on Thursday, outlasted unseeded French compatriot Nathalie Tauziat Saturday to reach the final of the WTA Championships.

Pierce, the first-ever French finalist at the season-ending event, will face second-seeded Czech Jana Novotna, who defeated eighth seed Irina Spirlea of Romania 7-6 (7/5), 6-2.

Pierce, who had been suffering from a kidney infection in recent weeks, will

be looking for her second title of the year and the 11th of her career. This season she was a winner at Rome and a finalist at the Australian Open, Amelia Island, and Berlin. Pierce, 22, used breaks in the fourth and eighth games to take the first set in 28 minutes but Tauziat tuned up her game in the second set, firing four aces and producing 16 winners to just four unforced errors. She held a 4-2 lead but was broken in the eighth game as Pierce evened the set.

After Pierce went ahead 5-4 Tauziat,

won the next three games to force the deciding set.

Pierce gained a service break in the sixth game of the third set and served for the match at 5-3. However, Tauziat broke back to love as Pierce made two bad errors and a double fault.

In next game, Tauziat saved Pierce's first match point with a backhand.

Four deuces later, Pierce earned a second match point with a forehand down the line that Tauziat could only dump into the net.

Pistons, Jazz beat Hawks and Spurs

CLEVELAND (AP) — Rookie Brevin Knight had an NBA season-high 20 assists. Wesley person scored 31 points and Shawn Kemp added 24 as the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Washington Wizards 110-101 Saturday night.

Knight, who had 13 points, finished five short of the NBA rookie assist record set by Ernie Dikregorio in 1974 and matched by Nate McMillan in 1987. Knight won a tremendous duel of point guards against Rod Strickland, who had 27 points and 17 assists.

The Cavaliers overcame a late surge by the Wizards to win their second straight after losing three in a row.

Heat 108, Raptors 104: In Miami, Isaac Austin recorded career-highs of 33 points and 22 rebounds as Miami extended Toronto's franchise-record losing streak to nine in a row.

Dan Majerle, who came off the injured list before the game, added 16 points and shot 5-of-6 from 3-point territory.

John Wallace paced the raptors with 28 points while Damon Stoudamire had 21 points and 11 assists.

Pistons 87, Hawks 85: In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Brian Williams scored 10 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter to lead the Detroit over undermanned Atlanta.

Atlanta was missing Steve Smith (back) and Alan Henderson (ankle), while Detroit got Joe Dumars back from a shoulder injury and finally had grant Hill at 100 per cent after a long bout with the flu.

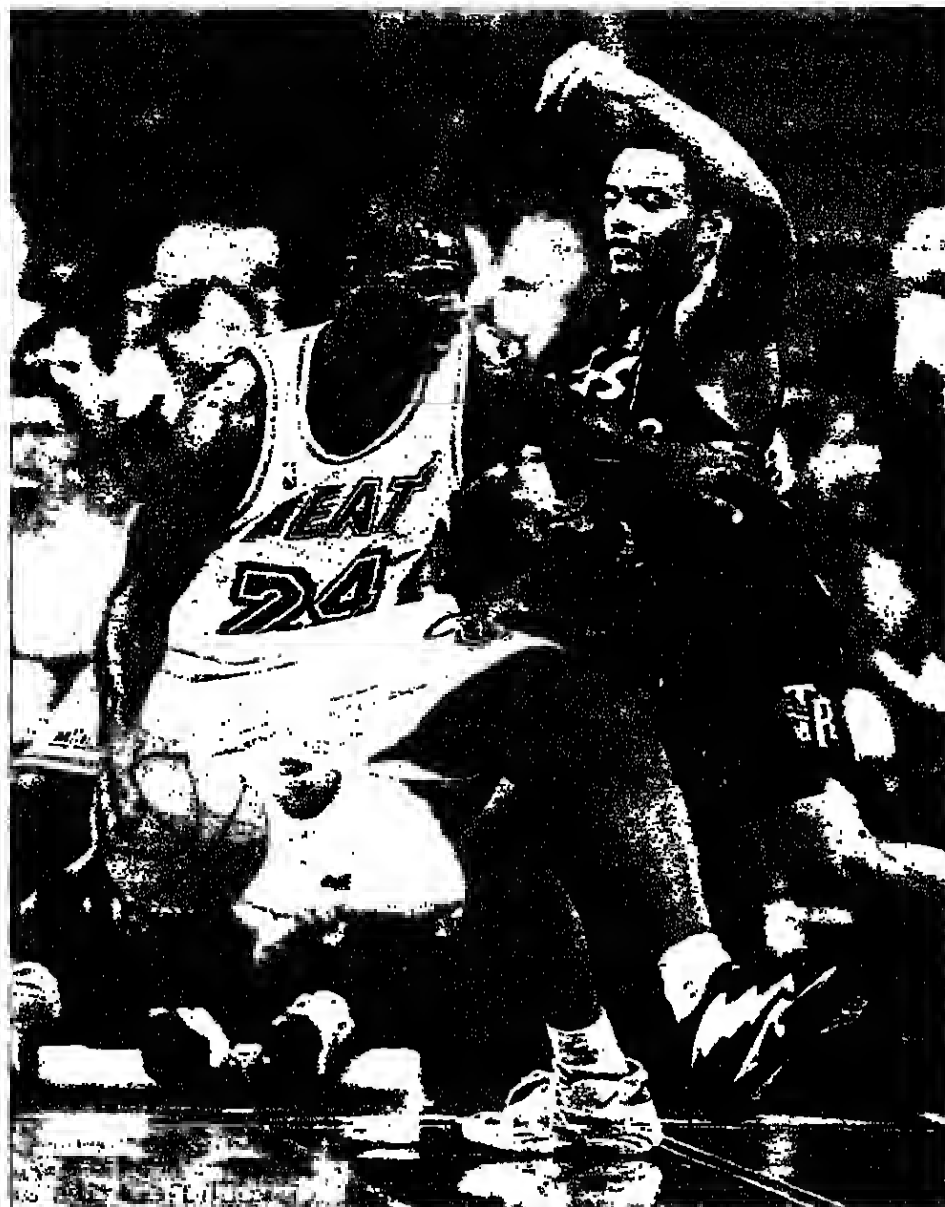
Hill had 19 points and nine assists and Dumars scored 16. Christian Laettner had 25 for Atlanta and Dikembe Mutumbo added 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Hornets 95, Pacers 94: In Indianapolis, Vlade Divac hit a free throw with 2.6 seconds left and Indiana turned the ball over on its last possession.

Indiana had overcome an 18-point deficit in the second half and led 94-91 with 1:05 to play. Anthony Mason's three-point play tied the game at 94 with 43.2 seconds remaining and Indiana's Jalen Rose had a turnover with 23.5 left.

The Hornets, who won their fourth straight and ended Indiana's three-game winning streak, held for a final shot and Divac was fouled. He made the first shot and missed the second.

Dale Davis got the rebound and called time-



Miami Heat forward Jamal Mashburn drives into Toronto Raptors' guard Damon Stoudamire, during the first quarter of NBA play at Miami Arena (Reuters photo)

out with 1.9 seconds remaining, rose then inbounded and the ball deflected off mark Jackson's hands near centre court.

Magic 108, 76ers 94: In Philadelphia, Derek Strong had 21 points and 13 rebounds and Horace Grant added 20 points on 10-for-13 shooting as Orlando defeated Philadelphia.

Strong had 17 of his points in the first half, as the Magic shot 67 per cent to open up a 62-41 halftime lead.

Rony Seikaly added 17 points for the magic, who are 5-0 when scoring 100 points and 5-0 when leading at halftime. Orlando is also 7-0 when leading after three quarters.

Jerry Stackhouse scored 16 points and rookie Tim Thomas had a season-high 14 for the 76ers.

Bucks 83, Mavericks 62: In Dallas, Terrell Brandon scored 18 points and Ray Allen added 17 as Milwaukee dealt Dallas its ninth straight defeat and held the Mavericks to a franchise low for points.

Glenn Robinson had 14 points and Armon Gilliam added 12 for the Bucks, who had lost three of their previous four.

Michael Finley had 12 points, Shawn Bradley added 11 and Hubert Davis had 10 for the Mavericks, who are winless since starting the season at 3-0.

Nets 93, Trail Blazers 87: In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jayson Williams put New Jersey

ahead on a three-point play with 28 seconds to go and Chris Gatling made two big defensive plays down the stretch as the Nets defeated Portland.

All five Nets' starters scored in double figures as New Jersey won for the fifth time in six home games.

Gatling finished with 23 points and 10 rebounds, Williams had 15 points and 11 rebounds and cassell had 17 points and 13 assists. Kendall Gill added 19 points, including a free throw and a layup in the final 18.3 seconds, and Kerry Kittles had 13.

Arvydas Sabonis had 19 points and 13 rebounds and Kenny Anderson scored 20.

Rockets 90, Warriors 84: In Houston, Kevin Willis had 22 points and 19 rebounds as Houston continued to dig out of its early-season slump.

The Rockets won their third straight game after losing their previous four. The Warriors dropped to 1-10.

Houston led 43-40 at the half but couldn't get a big edge until using an 11-4 spurt at the start of the fourth quarter to open a 73-62 lead with 8:25 to play.

Still, the Warriors bungled around until the end, led by Laurrell Sprewell with 28 points, including seven over the final 2:03.

Willis shot 9-for-20, dropping his season average to a still-impresive 55.5 per cent. He had his double-double by halftime with 13 points and 13

rebounds.

Supersonics 84, Nuggets 80: In Denver, Gary Payton and Delf Schrempp combined to score 11 of Seattle's last 13 points as the Supersonics rallied to defeat winless Denver.

Payton scored six points and Schrempp five over the final six minutes to help erase a 76-71 deficit. Seattle outscored Denver 13-4 during that rally.

Payton finished with 20 points and Schrempp 12 as the Sonics overcame 38 per cent shooting.

The Nuggets, missing starters Bryant Stith and Tony Battie because of injuries, fell to 0-11 and remained the NBA's only winless team.

Jazz 103, Spurs 74: In Salt Lake City, Karl Malone had 20 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists before getting ejected and Utah used a 27-2 first-half run to coast past San Antonio.

All five starters scored at least nine points for Utah (6-6), while the Spurs (7-5) made just 11 field goals in the first half and suffered their second blowout loss in as many nights.

Jeff Hornacek added 19 points for Utah, Adam Keefe scored a season-high 15 and Howard Easley added 13.

David Robinson recorded 22 points and 11 rebounds for San Antonio, while Cory Alexander contributed 13 points off the bench.

Celtic win keeps table race open

GLASGOW (AFP) — Celtic's 4-0 win over Dundee United puts them in pole position to grab the top Premiership position back from Hearts after Rangers failed to hold onto a 1-0 lead over Motherwell.

And Celtic will hope the script stays the same next week after this demolition of Coca-Cola Cup final opponents Dundee United.

A brace apiece for Andreas Thom and Henrik Larsson made for a major psychological boost for head coach Wim Jansen's side ahead of the forthcoming Ibrox clash.

Very little was given away before the interval until Erik Pedersen's push on David Hannah led to a 35th minute penalty, neatly converted by Thom for a 1-0 half-time lead.

But after the break, a well-balanced match turned emphatically in the home side's favour, with Dundee United keeper Sieb Dykstra at fault for Celtic's decisive second.

He fumbled a Jackie McNamara shot badly and Larsson slid in to poach there and back to double Celtic's advantage after 64 minutes.

Six minutes later, Thom swept in a third after Morten Wieghorst broke through strongly from midfield to put him clear on the right.

And after 77 minutes, Celtic made it a resounding 4-0 when Swede Larsson expertly chipped an advancing Dykstra from the edge of the area to cap victory in style.

Struggling Motherwell claimed their fourth point from the Old Firm inside eight days with a stirring second-half rally which ended with a late equaliser.

Rangers, despite a reshuffled side, set the pace in the first-half and deserved their interval lead. That goal came in the 20th minutes when Jorg Alberz split the home defence and Ally McCoist slotted the ball past Stevie Woods.

Motherwell picked up the pace after the break and snatched the equaliser after 80 minutes when Sbaun McKimming got the better of the break with Joachim Bjorklund. The ball broke to Owen Coyle and his pass was turned in by Tommy Coyne.

Aberdeen presented their new manager Alex Miller with a point but their fans did not see the kind of rejuvenated team they hoped for in their 1-1 draw at Dunfermline.

The visitors were outplayed in the first half and lucky not to be a goal behind at half time.

Even their goal in the 66th minute was the result of a defensive blunder.

Andy Todd failed to clear a Steve Glass lob and the ball fell to an unmarked Billy Dodds who slammed the ball past goalkeeper Ian Westwater.

Dunfermline showed all of their fighting spirit to come back in the 81st minute.

An Ivo Den Bieman free kick was headed out by a defender straight to Stewart Petrie who had come on as a substitute seven minutes earlier. He rifled a bullet into the corner of the Aberdeen net from 20 yards.

Philip Scott's first goal of the season — after just two minutes — gave St Johnstone three much needed premier division points at home to Hibs.

1st Division Handball Championship Al Salt seek to increase lead

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The second week of the second leg in Handball's First Division Championship kicks off Monday with Al Salt meeting 7th placed Umm Jozeh as they look to increase their 18 point lead atop the standings.

Al Salt took the lead last week after a 35-19 win over Kufranjeh and are followed by Al Ahli and Al Arabi with 15 points each.

The second leg of the championship started with expected wins for Al Salt, Al Hussein and Al Arabi.

Al Arabi 37 Kufranjeh 27: The experienced Al Arabi players gave their best against lowly Kufranjeh who looked helpless confronting Al Arabi's organised attacks.

Al Arabi pressured Kufranjeh's defence and kept the score running with a 17-11 first half lead.

Kufranjeh were kept scoreless through the first seven minutes of the first half.

The second half was without any doubt dominated by Al Arabi as they bombarded Kufranjeh's goal and ended the match with a precious three-point win to move to second place with 15 points.

Al Salt 35 Umm Jozeh 19: Al Salt scored an easy win and took an easy three points to stay on the top of the standings after a 35-19 (14-6) win over Umm Jozeh.

Al Salt played a merciless match depending on Mobammad and Ahmad Hindawi who paved the way for Tareq Rab'i and Mahmoud Yousef to easily score as Al Salt ended the

first half 14-6.

In the second half Umm Jozeh tried to put some pressure on their stubborn opponents but this attempt backfired and gave Al Salt the chance to widen their score and end the match 35-19.

Al Hussein 37 Amman 23: Al Hussein played a heated match against Amman who tried to tie the first half. The first half ended 15-14 for Al Hussein.

The second half witnessed complaints and objections from Amman's players and the referee had to stop the match four times. Al Hussein ended the match 37-23.

Meanwhile, the Jordan Handball Federation received a letter from Kufroum Club citing withdrawal from the league for financial reasons.

Standings after first week

Team	W	D	L	Gf	Ga	Pts
Salt	8	1	-	296	226	18
Al Ahli	7	1	-	289	219	15
Arabi	7	-	2	327	262	15
Hussein	6	-	3	272	258	13
Amman	3	1	5	273	267	7
Umm Jozeh	3	-	5	231	285	7
Y. Shouneh	2	-	6	236	236	4
Kufroum	-	1	7	217	275	1
Kufranjeh	-	1	8	252	313	1

Schedule of second week

Arabi vs. Umm Jozeh	Nov. 24	Sports Palace
Al Ahli vs. Kufranjeh	Nov. 24	Sports Palace
Salt vs. Y. Shouneh	Nov. 24	Sports Palace
Hussein vs. Kufroum	Nov. 25	Al Hassan City



Scotland's Colin McRae flies his Subaru Impreza over the jumps at the Millbrook Testing Centre on the first day of the British RAC Rally November 23. On Monday the cars compete in the woodlands of Wales (Reuters photo)



Britain's Pilsudski (R) ridden by Michael Kinane crosses the finish line to win the world's richest race Japan Cup at Tokyo race course November 23. Whipped home by Kinane, he bravely held off Japanese filly Air Groove (L) by a head to end his career in a blaze of glory. The Japan Cup was Pilsudski's last race before he goes to stud in Japan (Reuters photo)

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144	CINEMA TEL: 634144	CINEMA TEL: 699238	CINEMA TEL: 677420	CINEMA TEL: 679 3340	CINEMA TEL: 679 3340	Hisham Yanes Theatre TEL: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA "1"	PHILADELPHIA "2"	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	
	Fran Drescher & Timothy Dalton ... in	Patrick Stewart & Jonathan Frakes ... in	Nour Al Sharif & Layla Alwi... in	CONCORD "1" Rowan Atkinson... in	ABDOUN Nour Al Sharif & Layla Alwi... in	ABDOUN NOTHING TO LOSE	NOW ON DAILY THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE Starring Hisham Yanes and Amal Dabbas
	THE BEAUTICIAN & THE BEAST	STAR TREK FIRST CONTACT	AL MASEER (Arabic)	MR. BEAN	AL MASEER (Arabic)		
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Winner in the 1997 Cannes festival Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	For reservations call: 640123, 625155

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Netanyahu, settlers vow to move more Jews in Arab east Jerusalem

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday promised more Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem in response to the killing of a religious student by suspected Palestinian activists.

Mr. Netanyahu spoke at the dormitory of a Jewish religious seminary in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's walled Old City, where the slain student lived.

Gabriel Hirschberg, 26, was killed by automatic weapon fire early Thursday as he returned to the dormitory. Another student was wounded in the same attack. Police said they suspected the shooting was carried out by Palestinians.

"We will bless the memory of Gabi with building in Jerusalem," Mr. Netanyahu said. "We will honour the memory of Gabi by our settlement of Jerusalem and our development and building."

The seminary belongs to Ateret Cohanim, a group involved in buying up property for Jews in the Muslim quarter and other Arab areas.

Also on Sunday, Jewish settlers vowed to move more families into occupied Jerusalem's walled Old City in answer to the killing of a Jewish seminary student in an apparent Palestinian attack.

"We found 18 places and in these 18 places we decided overnight to begin refurbishing them in order to settle in the coming year, with God's help, 18 more families," said Matti Dan, head of the Ateret Cohanim settlement.

Mr. Dan spoke at the seminary with Premier Netanyahu sitting by his side in a show of support for the settlers' presence in the heart of Arab east Jerusalem.

A few hours later police said students from the seminary showed up at an Old City house they insisted belonged to Jews. They talked to a police commander and left before about 20 Arabs arrived. Police prevented them from entering by force.

Palestinians complained last week about the Israeli government's erection of a new police outpost following the attack. They assailed it as yet another Israeli bid to deprive them of their land.

Authorities sealed off large sections of the Old City and hundreds of troops patrolled its narrow alleys as Mr. Netanyahu and several cabinet ministers toured the site of last week's shooting.

"We intend to continue with other things that will allow us to enforce our sovereignty over all parts of Jerusalem and to facilitate the settlement of Jews everywhere," Mr. Netanyahu said at the seminary.

Dan's deputy Yossi Kaufman said they had discussed the plan with Mr. Netanyahu to settle more Jews in Arab quarters of the Old City.

"The prime minister said in a positive manner that our requests appear acceptable to him," Mr. Kaufman said.

Israel occupied Arab East Jerusalem in 1967. The Palestinian National Authority wants to make Arab east Jerusalem the capital of the future Palestinian state.

In Gaza, President Yasser Arafat urged U.S. President Bill Clinton to give peace-making a push.

"What is important is a real push from the American administration towards the Israeli government which is not until now implementing accurately and honestly what has been agreed upon in the White House under the supervision of President Clinton himself," he told reporters.

Mr. Clinton made an urgent appeal on Friday for a renewed resolve among Israelis and Palestinians to revive peace moves.

Ateret Cohanim boasts to have settled more than 60 Jewish families in Arab quarters of the Old City, in addition to seminaries, synagogues and shops, since 1967.

A Miami-based Jewish millionaire, backed by Ateret Cohanim, stood behind the September settler takeover of two buildings in Ras Al Amoud, an Arab quarter outside the Old City, which threatened to ignite Palestinian anger.

Netanyahu chief-of-staff resigns in attempt to defuse Likud revolt

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's controversial chief-of-staff and right-hand man, Avigdor Lieberman, resigned Sunday in an apparent bid to defuse a revolt by senior members of the ruling Likud Party.

Mr. Netanyahu issued a statement accepting the resignation of "Yvete" Lieberman, a Russian immigrant nicknamed Rasputin by his critics for his tireless behind-the-scenes manoeuvring for his boss.

"I express great sorrow over this resignation of a good, trustworthy friend who stood by me for many years," Mr. Netanyahu said.

Several ministers had demanded Mr. Lieberman's dismissal since a Likud convention earlier this month at which he was accused of waging a campaign to strengthen Mr. Netanyahu's position in the party at the expense of potential leadership rivals.

At Mr. Lieberman's instigation, the convention voted to abandon primary elections to select candidates for parliament and other posts, putting that responsibility in the hands of a central committee dominated by Netanyahu loyalists.

The move, which was opposed by most senior Likud leaders, was seen as designed to give Mr. Netanyahu the power to sideline potential rivals and silence critics in parliament.

Critics were particularly outraged because while Mr. Netanyahu publicly called during the convention for the primary vote to be postponed, Mr. Lieberman lobbied successfully behind the scenes for an immediate decision.

Following the convention, a group of ministers and other Likud heavyweights openly plotted to oust Mr. Netanyahu while he was abroad for five days.

The mutiny was led by a mixed group of figures from the party's far-right and moderate wings, including former ministers Benny Begin and Dan Meridor.

Communications Minister Limor Livnat and the mayors of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Ehud Olmert and Roni Milo.

Since his return on Wednesday, Mr. Netanyahu has sought to quell the mutiny. He first named a special committee to look into "irregularities" at the party convention and then promised to put the primaries cancellation to a vote of the 200,000 rank-and-file Likud members who have in the past been charged with picking candidates.

But in his public statements Mr. Netanyahu refused the calls for Mr. Lieberman's dismissal.

Israel Television quoted associates of Mr. Lieberman saying he had felt repudiated by Mr. Netanyahu's decision to order a probe into the Likud convention scandal and decided to resign.

But most analysts viewed the resignation as a first sign of a central committee dominated by Netanyahu loyalists.

significant climbdown by Mr. Netanyahu, who has in the past dealt with threats to his position by brazenly attacking his opponents.

Today the prime minister appears chastened by the scope of the mutiny against him within the Likud, and by popularity polls which show him trailing far behind Labour leader Ehud Barak.

"Another domino has fallen and it will lead to the downfall of this government," said Labour Party deputy Dalia Yitzik.

Science Minister Michael Eitan, who had been highly critical of Mr. Lieberman's role but played a mediating role between Mr. Netanyahu and his harshest Likud opponents, called Mr. Lieberman's resignation "a good, required step."

"He has contributed a lot to the Likud with this decision," said Mr. Eitan, who once lamented that "whatever happens in this country, for better or for worse, is due to Yvete Lieberman."

There was no immediate reaction from those Likud figures who led the recent anti-Netanyahu revolt.

Mr. Lieberman, 38, emigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union in 1978 and had a reputation as a brawling anti-Arab militant in his student days at Hebrew University.

He rose to become Mr. Netanyahu's chief aide in the opposition, when the Likud played a leading role in the virulent anti-government campaign that preceded the assassination of Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995.

He was appointed chief-of-staff immediately after Mr. Netanyahu took office in June 1996.

Clinton lashes out at Netanyahu — press

TEL AVIV (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton has told Israeli visitors that he has lost faith in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and feels the right-wing Israeli leader's policies are undermining U.S. interests in the Middle East, Israeli major newspapers reported Sunday.

Mr. Clinton was said to have made the unusually frank criticism of Mr. Netanyahu during a White House luncheon Friday with former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Leah Rabin, widow of assassinated Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin.

Mr. Peres and Ms. Rabin were invited to the White House to give President Clinton a peace prize for his efforts in helping Israel's former government under Yitzhak Rabin reach peace agreements with the Palestinians.

Israel's major newspapers all gave front-page coverage to the White House meeting, noting that Mr. Clinton found four hours to spend with two leaders of Israel's "peace camp" while he had been unable to schedule any encounters with Mr. Netanyahu when the prime minister was in the U.S. last week.

U.S. officials have said President Clinton will meet with Mr. Netanyahu sometime next month, but Israeli press reports said the U.S. administration was purposely holding back on setting a date.

The papers as well as Israel Radio and Television all quoted U.S. and Israeli participants in Friday's gathering as saying Mr. Clinton and presidential aides had made their harshest criticism yet of Mr. Netanyahu's hardline stance in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

Mr. Clinton was notably quoted as saying Mr. Netanyahu had backed down on an agreement to work out some form of "time out" in Jewish settlement expansion in disputed areas.

The settlement issue and Mr. Netanyahu's refusal to carry out promised troop withdrawals from the West Bank led to a breakdown in negotiations last March and his intransigence on the two issues continues to hamper U.S. efforts to mediate a

resumption of talks.

The press reports said Mr. Clinton complained that broad Arab anger over Mr. Netanyahu's policies and frustration with Washington's inability to break the deadlock had undermined U.S. efforts to garner regional support in the standoff with Iraq over U.N. weapons inspections.

Interviewed on Israel Radio, Mr. Peres refused to reveal what Mr. Clinton told him.

Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman, David Bar-Ilan, denied the reports.

"There has been no promise made about freezing building and settlements," he told AFP.

Mr. Bar-Ilan said Israel had agreed to discuss "the notion of a time out" in settlement, but said for the current government this would never mean a halt to the expansion of current settlements.

When asked about the state of Israel-U.S. relations, however, Mr. Bar-Ilan acknowledged that the two sides "seem to disagree on who is responsible for the difficulties" being experienced in the peace process.

He reiterated Israeli charges that the Palestinian National Authority had still taken "no action against terrorism" and that there could be no real progress in the peace process until this changed.

The Yediot Aharanot newspaper reported Sunday that Mr. Netanyahu had added to U.S. alarm during a meeting Nov. 14 in London with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright when he said Israel's much-awaited next troop pullback from the West Bank would concern only three to five per cent of the territory.

Washington reportedly wants the pullback to cover at least 10 per cent of the West Bank and the Yediot Aharanot said Ms. Albright made clear she would publicly voice her frustration with Israel if it does not make a sufficient offer on the withdrawals and settlements issued by early December.

Under U.S.-backed interim peace accords, Israel is obliged by mid-1998 to carry out three more troop pullbacks from the West Bank, where Palestinians currently have full control over only three per cent of the area.

Duck arrested for sorcery

KINSHASA (AFP) — Kinshasa police have taken into custody a duck suspected of sorcery after causing a traffic accident, a local newspaper reported.

The duck had collided with a minibus, shattering its windscreen and raining broken glass on its passengers, the daily La Tempete des Tropiques said.

When the duck landed unharmed on a passenger's lap, angry commuters surrounded him and cursed him as a devil, convinced that evil influences had caused the accident.

The driver rescued the duck from the crowd but took him to the nearest police station "to see justice done."

The daily gave no hint of the duck's fate.

Britain's anti-drugs deputy admits smoking cannabis

LONDON (AFP) — One of the two men appointed to lead the British government's crusade against drug abuse admitted to having tried cannabis when he was a student.

Michael Trace, 36, who holds a \$72,000 a year job as anti-drugs coordinator, said his history was very familiar to most students around the early 1980s.

"Mr. Trace has said that 16 years ago, when he was a student, he once tried smoking a joint. It is all a very long time ago," a government spokesman said.

Celine Dion and Jean Chretien — descendants of Charlemagne?

QUEBEC (AFP) — Canada's pop priestess and the country's prime minister are just two of the thousands of Quebecers said to be directly descended from Charlemagne, according to the Canadian-French Genealogical Society.

In their most recent bulletin "Memoires," the group asserts that singer Celine Dion and Prime Minister Jean Chretien enjoy royal lineage as descendants of Catherine Baillon, who arrived in Quebec from France in 1669.

Researchers said Baillon was the 29th generation from her progenitor, the Emperor Charlemagne, who ruled what is now France from 768 to 814.

Modine fails to 'jangle his stuff' in upcoming Altman movie

HOLLYWOOD (AFP) — Matthew Modine tried but failed at an attempt at full-frontal nudity in the upcoming movie "Short Cuts," directed by Robert Altman.

Modine said that he wanted to appear totally naked in a scene in which the woman playing his wife, Julianne Moore, stands nude for a monologue for a painfully long time. "It was only fair, and I didn't mind doing equal time," Modine says.

"I was all ready to do it, since my female co-star had to stand there nude, but no," Modine says. "I wouldn't have minded. Look at my hands, look at my feet, everything's in proportion!"

Altman mixed the idea, saying he couldn't deal with all that stuff jangling in front of men — though he apparently has no problems showing off all that stuff jangling in front of women.

Jackie Chan reveals his attitude to life

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong's international superstar Jackie Chan Wednesday launched a worldwide campaign to sell the magic of his personal success in a movie called "My Story."

The globally renowned action super-star said at the launch that "My Story" was the result of a two-year production with a camera crew following him from Hollywood, Beijing, and South Africa.

"They followed me everywhere, except into the toilets," said Chan.

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